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THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
GEOFFREY CHAUCER

TO WHICH ARE APPENDED

POEMS ATTRIBUTED TO CHAUCER

EDITED BY
ARTHUR GILMAN, M. A.

*"O Master, pardon me, if yet in vain
Thou art my Master, and I fail to bring
Before men's eyes the image of the thing
My heart is filled with."*

WILLIAM MORRIS.

IN THREE VOLUMES
VOL. II.



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THE CANTERBURY TALES.

TALES OF THE FOURTH DAY.

Words of the Host to the Squire.

“Squier, come neer, if it youre wille be,
And sey somwhat of love ; for certes, ye
Konnen ther-on as muche as any man.”

“Nay, sire,” quod he, “but I wol seye as I
kan 14,780

With hertly wyl, — for I wol nat rebelle
Agayn youre lust. A tale wol I telle.
Have me excused, if I speke amys,
My wyl is good, and lo, my tale is this.”¹

Heere bigynneth The Squieres Tale.

FIRST PART.

At Sarray,² in the land of Tartarye,
Ther dwelte a kyng that werreyed Russye,

¹ The reader will find the Squire's Tale, its indebtedness to the Travels of Marco Polo, and the subjects of Magic and Arabian fiction discussed by the Rev. W. W. Skeat, with an entertaining and instructive completeness, in his edition of the tale issued by the Clarendon Press, which is so well known that its conclusions only will be indicated in this connection. ² Sarai, on the Volga, where was the court of Batu Khan, a grandson of Gengis Khan. He was leader of the *Golden Horde*, a Tartar land which ravaged south-eastern Europe in 1240, and for some years thereafter.

Thurgh which ther dyde many a doughty man.
 This noble kyng was cleped Cambyuskan,¹
 Which in his tyme was of so greet renoun
 That ther was no wher in no regioun 14,790
 So excellent a lord in alle thyng.
 Hym lakked noght that longeth to a kyng ;
 And of the secte of which that he was born
 He kepte his lay,² to which that he was sworn ,
 And ther to he was hardy, wys, and riche,
 Pitous and just, and evermore ³ yliche ;
 Sooth of his word, benigne and honourable,
 Of his corage as any centre ⁴ stable ;
 Yong, fressh, strong, and in armes desirous
 As any bachelor of al his hous. 14,800
 A fair persone he was, and fortunat,
 And kepte alwey so wel roial estat
 That ther was nowher swich another man.

This noble kyng, this Tartre Cambyuskan,
 Hadde two sones on Elpheta his wyf,
 Of whiche the eldeste highte Algarsyf ;
 That oother sone was cleped Cambalo.⁵
 A doghter hadde this worthy kyng also
 That yongest was, and highte Canacee,
 But for to telle yow al hir beautee 14,810
 It lyth nat in my tonge nyn my konnyng,
 I dar nat undertake so heigh a thyng ; (10,350 T.)

¹ Cambaluc, now Pekin, was the seat of the court of Kublai Khan, and it is here described, though assigned to Gengis Khan. There is a double confusion in the text. Cambyuskan is Gengis Khan and Milton's Cambuscan. *Il Penseroso*, l. 110. ² Law, religious faith. ³ *Elles.* MS. reads "and pitous and just alwey." ⁴ Of a circle ⁵ Suggested by the Cambaluc of Marco Polo.

Myn Englissh eek is insufficient ;
 It moste been a rethor excellent
 That koude hise colours longynge for **that art**
 If he sholde hire discryven every part ;
 I am noon swich, I moot speke as I kan.

And so bifel that whan this Cambyuskan
 Hath twenty wynter born his diademe, —
 As he was wont fro yeer to yeer, I deme, —
 He leet the feeste of his nativitee 14,821
 Doon cryen thurgh out Sarray his citee
 The last Idus¹ of March after the yeer.

Phebus, the sonne, ful joly was and cleer,
 For he was neigh his exaltacioun
 In Martes face, and in his mansioun²
 In Aries, the colerik hoote signe.
 Ful lusty³ was the weder and benigne,
 For which the foweles agayn the sonne sheene,
 What for the sesoun and the yonge grene,
 Ful loude songen hire affecciouns, 14,831
 Hem semed han gotten hem protecciouns
 Agayn the swerd of wynter, keene and coold.

This Cambyuskan — of which I have yow
 toold —
 In roial vestiment sit on his deys,
 With diademe ful heighe in his paleys,
 And halt his feeste so solempne and so ryche,
 That in this world ne was ther noon it lyche ;
 Of which, if I shal tellen al tharray,

¹ The very day of the Ides, *i. e.*, the 15th That is, the mansion of
 Mars. ² Pleasant.

Thanne wolde it occupie a someres day ; 14,840
 And eek it nedeth nat for to devyse
 At every cours the ordre of hire servyse.
 I wol nat tellen of hir strange sewes,¹
 Ne of hir swannes, ne of hire heronsewes.²
 Eek in that lond, as tellen knyghtes olde,
 Ther is som mete that is ful deynte holde
 That in this lond men recche of it but smal ;
 Ther nys no man that may reporten al.

I wol nat taryen yow, for it is pryme,³
 And for it is no fruyt, but los of tyme ; 14,850
 Un-to my firste ⁴ I wole have my recours.

And so bifel that after the thridde cours,
 Whil that this kyng sit thus in his nobleye,
 Herknyng his mynstrals hir thynges pleye
 Biforn hym at the bord deliciously,
 In at the halle dore, al sodeynly,
 Ther cam a knyght ⁵ up on a steede of bras,
 And in his hand a brood mirour of glas ;
 Upon his thombe he hadde of gold a ring,
 And by his syde a naked swerd hangyng ;
 And up he rideth to the heighe bord. 14,861
 In al the halle ne was ther spoken a word
 For merveille of this knyght ; hym to biholde
 Ful bisily ther wayten yonge and olde.

¹ Delicate dishes. ² Heronshaws. ³ This tale was told in the morning of the fourth day, by Mr. Furnivall's arrangement, here followed. ⁴ First design. ⁵ It was not uncommon for one thus to ride into a hall while the lord and his guests were at table. An instance, among many, is found in the story of the Lady of the Fountain, in the *Mabinogion*. "As Owain one day sat at meat, in the City of Caerlleon upon Usk, behold a damsel entered, upon a bay horse with a curling mane."

This strange knyght that cam thus sodeynly,
 Al armed save his heed ful richely, (10,404 T.)
 Saleweth kyng and queene, and lordes alle,
 By ordre as they seten in the halle,
 With so heigh reverence and obeisaunce,
 As wel in speche as in contenaunce, 14,870
 That Gawayn with his olde curteisye,
 Though he were comen ageyn out of fairye,
 Ne koude hym nat amende with a word ;
 And after this, biforn the heighe bord,
 He with a manly voys seith his message
 After the forme used in his langage,
 With outen vice¹ of silable, or of lettre ;
 And for his tale sholde seme the bettre,
 Accordant to hise wordes was his cheere,
 As techeth art of speche hem that it leere.
 Al be it² that I kan nat sowne his stile, 14,881
 Ne kan nat clymben over so heigh a style,
 Yet seye I this, as to commune entente,
 Thus muche amounteth al that evere he mente,
 If it so be that I have it in mynde.

He seyde, "The kyng of Arabe and of Inde,
 My lige lord, on this solempne day
 Saleweth yow, as he best kan and may,
 And sendeth yow, in honour of youre feeste,
 By me that am al redy at youre heeste, 14,800
 This steede of bras, that esily and weel
 Kan in the space of o day natureel, —
 This is to seyn, in foure and twenty houres, —

¹ Fault. ² Not in Elles. MS

Wher so yow lyst, in droghte or elles shoures,
 Beren youre body in to every place
 To which youre herte wilneth for to pace,¹
 With outen wem² of yow, thurgh foul or fair ;
 Or, if yow lyst to fleen as hye in the air 14,898
 As dooth an egle whan that hym list to soore,
 This same steede shal bere yow evere moore,
 With outen harm, til ye be ther yow leste,
 Though that ye slepen on his bak, or reste ;
 And turne ageyn with writhyng³ of a pyn.
 He that it wroghte koude ful many a gyn.⁴
 He wayted⁵ many a constellacioun
 Er he had doon this operacioun,
 And knew ful many a seel, and many a bond.⁶

“ This mirroure eek, that I have in myn hond
 Hath swich a myght that men may in it see
 Whan ther shal fallen any adversitee 14,910
 Un-to youre regne,⁷ or to youre self also,
 And openly who is youre freend or foo ;
 And over al this, if any lady bright (10,451 T.)
 Hath set hire herte on any maner wight,
 If he be fals she shal his tresoun see,
 His newe love, and al his subtiltee,
 So openly that ther shal no thyng hyde.
 Wherefore, ageyn this lusty someres tyde,
 This mirour and this ryng that ye may see
 He hath sent to my lady Canacee, 14,920
 Yourre excellente doghter that is heere.

¹ Pass. ² Injury. ³ Turning. ⁴ Engine, contrivance. ⁵ Watched
 As his work in magic made necessary. ⁷ Kingdom.

"The vertu of the ryng, if ye wol heere,
Is this, that if hire lust it for to were
Up-on hir thombe, or in hir purs it bere,
Ther is no fowel that fleeth under the hevene,
That she ne shal wel understonde his stevene,¹
And knowe his menyng openly and pleyn,
And answeere hym in his langage ageyn ;
And every gras that groweth up-on roote
She shal eek knowe and whom it wol do boote,²
Al be hise woundes never so depe and wyde.

"This naked swerd that hangeth by my syde
Swich vertu hath that what man so ye smyte,
Thurgh out his armure it wole kerve³ and
byte,

14,934

Were it as thikke as is a branched ook ;
And what man that is wounded with a strook
Shal never be hool, til that yow list of grace
To stroke hym with the plat in thilke⁴ place
Ther he is hurt ; this is as muche to seyn,
Ye moote with the plat swerd ageyn 14,940
Strike hym in the wounde and it wol close.
This is a verray sooth with outen glose,
It failleth nat whils it is in youre hoold."

And whan this knyght hath thus his tale
toold,

He rideth out of halle, and doun he lighte.
His steede, which that shoon as sonne brighte,
Stant in the court stille as any stoon.

- Voice. ² Good, cure (3 E. *hote*, a remedy). ⁵ Elles. MS
eads "hym kerve." ⁴ Elles. MS reads "that."

This knyght is to his chambre lad anoon
And is unarmed and un-to mete yset. 14,949

The presentes been ful roially yfet,¹ —
This is to seyn, the swerd and the mirour, —
And born anon in to the heighe tour,
With certeine officers ordeyned therfore ;
And un-to Canacee this ryng was bore
Solempnely, ther she sit at the table ;
But sikerly, with outen any fable,
The hors of bras, that may nat be remewed,²
It stant as it were to the ground yglewed ;
Ther may no man out of the place it dryve
For noon engyn of wyndas ne polyve ;³ 14,960
And cause why ? for they kan nat the craft ;
And therfore in the place they han it laft,
Til that the knyght hath taught hem the man-
ere (10,501 T.)

To voyden hym, as ye shal after heere.

Greet was the prees that swarmeth to and
fro

To gauren⁴ on this hors that stondeth so ;
For it so heigh was, and so brood and long,
So wel proporcioned for to been strong,
Right as it were a steede of Lumbardye ;
Ther-with so horsly, and so quyk of eye, 14,970
As it a gentil Poilleys⁵ courser were ;
For certes, fro his tayl un-to his ere,
Nature ne art ne koude hym nat amende

¹ Fetched. ² Removed. ³ Windlass nor pulley (O. E. *windan* to wind). ⁴ Gaze. Cf. "garish." *Il Penseroso*, l. 141. ⁵ Apulian

In no degree, as al the peple wende ;
 But everemoore hir mooste wonder was
 How that it koude go, and was of bras !
 It was a fairye,¹ as al the peple semed.
 Diverse folk diversely they demed ;²
 As many heddes as manye wittes ther been.
 They murmureden as dooth a swarm of been,
 And maden skiles³ after hir fantasies. 14,981
 Rehersynge of thise olde poetries ;
 And seyde that it was lyk the Pegasee,
 The hors that hadde wynges for to flee ;
 Or elles it was the Grekes hors, Synoun,⁴
 That broghte Troie to destruccioun,
 As men in thise olde geestes rede.⁵

"Myn herte," quod oon, "is everemoore in
 drede ;

I trowe som men of armes been ther-inne,
 That shapen hem this citee for to wynde ;
 It were right good that al swich thyng were
 knowe." 14,991

Another rownded⁶ to his felawe lowe,
 And seyde, "He lyeth ! it is rather lyk
 An apparence, ymaad by som magyk ;
 As jogelours pleyen at thise feestes grete."
 Of sondry doutes thus they jangle and trete,⁷
 As lewed peple demeth comunly.
 Of thynges that been maad moore subtilly

¹ An illusion. ² Cf. l. 4633. ³ Reasonings. ⁴ The horse of the Greek Sinon. ⁵ The *Geste Hystoriale* (see note to l. 4710) mentions Sinon as maker of the horse of *brass* used by the Greeks at Troy. Cf. l. 8840, and *Legende of Goode Women*, l. 930 ⁶ Whispered
 Treat

Than they kan in hir lewednesse comprehende,
They demen gladly to the badder ende. 15,000

And somme of hem wondred on the mirour
That born was up in-to the hye tour,
Hou men myghte in it swiche thynges se.

Another answerde and seyde it myghte wel be
Naturelly by composiciouns

Of anglis, and of slye reflexiouns ;

And seyden that in Rome was swich oon.¹

They speken of Alocen² and Vitulon,³

And Aristotle, that writen in hir lyves 15,009

Of queynte mirours, and of prospectives,

As knowne they that han hir bookes herd.

And oother folk han wondred on the swerd

That wolde percen thurgh out every thyng ;

And fille in speche of Thelophus the kyng,⁴

And of Achilles with his queynte spere,

For he koude with it bothe heele and dere,⁵

Right in swich wise as men may with the swerd

Of which right now ye han youre-selven herd.

They speken of sondry hardyng of metal,

And speke of medicynes ther with al, 15,020

And how and whanne it sholde yharded be,

Which is unknowe, algates unto me. (10,560 r.)

Tho speeke they of Canacees ryng,

And seyden alle that swich a wonder thyng

Of craft of rynges herde they nevere noon ;

¹ Virgil's mirror, so called. See *Confessio Amantis*, book v.

² Alhazen, Arabian astronomer. ³ Vitello, Polish mathematician.

⁴ Of Mysia, wounded by the spear of Achilles, and cured by its rust. Cf. *Inferno*, xxxi. 4, and 2 *K. Henry VI.*, act v., sc. 1, l. 100

⁵ Harm.

Save that he Moyses and kyng Salomon
Hadden a name of konnyng in swich art ;
Thus seyn the peple and drawen hem apart.

But nathelees somme seiden that it was
Wonder to maken of fern-asshen glas, 15,030
And yet nys glas nat lyk asshen of fern,
But for they han yknowen it so fern ¹
Therfore cesseth hir janglyng and hir wonder.

As soore wondren somme on cause of thonder,
On ebbe, on flood, on gossomer, and on myst,
And on alle thyng til that the cause is wyst.
Thus jangle they, and demen and devyse,
Til that the kyng gan fro the bord aryse.

Phebus hath laft the angle meridional, ²
And yet ascendyng was the beest roial,
The gentil Leon, ³ with his Aldrian, ⁴ 15,041
Whan that this Tartre kyng Cambyuskan
Roos fro his bord, ther that he sat ful hye.
Tofor ⁵ hym gooth the loude mynstralcy
Til he cam to his chambre of parementz ; ⁶
Ther as they sownen diverse instrumentz
That it is lyk an hevene for to heere.
Now dauncen lusty Venus children deere,
For in the Fyssh ⁷ hir lady sat ful hye 15,049
And looketh on hem with a freendly eye.

This noble kyng is set up in his trone ;

¹ Long ago. ² That is, it was after noon. ³ The sign Leo. ⁴ Al-
drian, a star "*in fronte Leonis*," as the ancients said. ⁵ Before.
⁶ Ornaments. State chamber. ⁷ Pisces, in which astrologers said
the power of Venus was at its greatest. Cf. l. 10,746.

This strange knyght is fet to hym ful soone,
 And on the daunce he gooth with Canacee.
 Heere is the revel and the jolitee
 That is nat able a dul man to devyse ;
 He moste han knowen love and his servyse,
 And been a feestlych man as fressh as May,
 That sholde yow devysen swich array.

Who koude telle yow the forme of daunces
 So unkouth,¹ and so fresshe contenaunces
 Swich subtil lookyng and dissymulynges
 For drede of jalouse mennes aperceyvynge ?
 No man but Launcelet, and he is deed. 15,063
 Therfore I passe of al this lustiheed ;²
 I sey namoore, but in this jolynesse (10,603 T.)
 I lete hem til men to the soper dresse.

The styward bite spices for to hye,³
 And eek the wyn, in al this melodye.
 The usshers and the squiers been ygoon,
 The spices and the wyn is come anon. 15,070
 They ete and drynke, and whan this hadde an
 ende,

Un-to the temple, as reson was, they wende.

The service doon they soupen al by day ;
 What nedeth me rehercen hire array ?
 Ech man woot wel that a kynges feeste
 Hath plentee to the mooste and to the leeste,
 And deyntees mo than been in my knowyng.

At after soper gooth this noble kyng
 To seen this hors of bras, with al the route

¹ Novel, till then unknown. ² Merriment. ³ Hasten.

Of lordes and of ladyes hym aboute. 15,080
 Swich wondryng was ther on this hors of bras
 That syn the grete sege of Troie was, —
 Ther as men wondreden on an hors also, —
 Ne was ther swich a wondryng as was tho.
 But fynally, the kyng axeth this knyght
 The vertu of this courser, and the myght,
 And preyde hym to telle his governaunce.

This hors anoon bigan to trippe and daunce
 Whan that this knyght leyde hand up-on his
 reyne, 15,089

And seyde, "Sire, ther is namoore to seyne,
 But whan yow list to ryden any where
 Ye mooten trille¹ a pyn stant in his ere,
 Which I shal telle yow bitwix us two.
 Ye moote nempne² hym to what place also
 Or to what contree that yow list to ryde ;
 And whan ye come ther as yow list abyde,
 Bidde hym descende, and trille another pyn, —
 For ther in³ lith theeffect of al the gyn,⁴ —
 And he wol down descende and doon youre
 wille,

And in that place he wol stonde stille. 15,100
 Though al the world the contrarie hadde
 yswore,

He shal nat thennes been ydrawe ne ybore ;
 Or, if yow liste bidde hym thennes goon,
 Trille this pyn, and he wol vanysshe anoon
 Out of the sighte of every maner wight,

¹ Twirl. ² Tell ³ Not in Elles. MS ⁴ Contrivance.

And come agayn, be it by ¹ day or nyght,
 Whan that yow list to clepen hym ageyn
 In swich a gyse as I shal to yow seyn
 Bitwixe yow and me, and that ful soone.
 Ride whan yow list, ther is namoore to doone.'

Enformed whan the kyng was of that knyght,
 And hath conceyved in his wit aright 15,112
 The manere and the forme of al this thyng,
 Ful ² glad and blithe this noble doughty ¹ kyng
 Repeireth to his revel as biforn. (10,653 T.)

The brydel is un-to the tour yborn
 And kept among hise jueles leeve and deere,
 The hors vanysshed, I noot in what manere,
 Out of hir sighte, — ye gete namoore of me ;
 But thus I lete in lust and jolitee 15,120
 This Cambyuskan hise lordes festeiynge,
 Til that ¹ wel ny the day bigan to sprynge.

SECOND PART.

The norice of digestioun, the sleepe,
 Gan on hem wynke, and bad hem taken keepe
 That muchel drynke and labour wolde han
 reste ;
 And with a galpyng ³ mouth hem alle he keste,
 And seyde, it was tyme to lye adoun,
 For blood was in his domynacioun. 15,128
 "Cherisseth blood, natures freend," quod he.
 They thanken hym galpynge, by two, by thre,

¹ Not in Elles. MS. ² Elles. MS. reads "thus." ³ Yawning.

And every wight gan drawe hym to his reste
As sleepe hem bad; they tooke it for the beste.

Hire dremes shul nat been ytoold for me;
Ful were hire heddes of fumositee,¹
That causeth dreem, of which ther nys no
charge.²

They slepen til that it was pryme large,³
The mooste part, but it were Canacee.
She was ful measurable as wommen be,
For of hir fader hadde she take leve
To goon to reste, soone after it was eve.
Hir liste nat appalled⁴ for to be, 15,141
Ne on the morwe unfeestlich⁵ for to se,
And slepte hire firste sleepe and thanne awook;
For swich a joye she in hir herte took,
Bothe of hir queynte ryng and hire mirour,
That twenty tyme she changed hir colour,
And in hire sleepe right for impressioun
Of hire mirour she hadde a visioun.
Wherfore er that the sonne gan up glyde
She cleped on hir maistresse hire bisyde,
And seyde that hire liste for to ryse. 15,151

Thise olde wommen that been gladly wyse,
As is⁶ hire maistresse, answerde hire anon,
And seyde, "Madame, whider wil ye goon
Thus erly, for the folk been alle on reste?"

"I wol," quod she, "arise, — for me leste
No lenger for to slepe, — and walke aboute."

¹ Cf. ll. 8536, 9641. ² Significance. ³ Fully prime, *i. e.*, nine A. M.
⁴ Enfeebled. ⁵ Jaded. ⁶ Not in Elles. MS

Hire maistresse clepeth wommen a greet
 route,
 And up they rysen wel ¹ a ten or twelve ;
 Up riseth fresshe Canacee hir-selve, 15,160
 As rody and bright as dooth the yonge sonne
 That in the Ram is foure degrees up ronne.
 Noon hyer was he ² whan she redy was,
 And forth she walketh esily a pas,³ (10,702 T.)
 Arrayed after the lusty sesoun soote,
 Lightly for to pleye, and walke on foote,
 Nat but with fyve or sixe of hir meynee,⁴
 And in a trench forth in the park gooth she.

The vapour which that fro the erthe glood ⁵
 Made the sonne to seme rody and brood, 15,176
 But nathelees it was so fair a sighte
 That it made alle hire hertes for to lighte,⁶ —
 What for the sesoun, and the morwenynge,
 And for the foweles that she herde synge ;
 For right anon she wiste what they mente
 Right by hir song, and knew al hire entente.

The knotte ⁷ why that every tale is toold
 If it be taried til that lust be coold
 Of hem that han it after herkned yooore,⁸
 The savour passeth ever lenger the moore,
 For fulsomnesse of his prolixitee ; 15,18
 And by the same resoun thynketh me.
 I sholde to the knotte condescende
 And maken of hir walkyng soone an ende.

¹ Fully. Cf. l. 24. ² It was not yet quarter past six. ³ Slowly
 Menials. ⁵ Glided, arose. ⁶ Gladden. ⁷ Gist (Latin, *nodus*)
 Long.

Amydde a tree fordrye,¹ as whit as chalk,
 As Canacee was pleyng in hir walk,
 Ther sat a faucon over hire heed ful hye,
 That with a pitous voys so gan to crye
 That all the wode resounded of hire cry.
 Ybeten hath she hir-self so pitously 15,190
 With bothe hir wynges til the rede blood
 Ran endelong the tree ther as² she stood,
 And evere in oon she cryde alwey and shrighthe,³
 And with hir beek hir selven so she prighthe,⁴
 That ther nys tygre, ne noon so crueel beest,
 That dwelleth outhur in wode or in forest,
 That nolde han wept if that she wepe koude
 For sorwe of hire, she shrighthe alwey so loude ;
 For ther nas nevere yet no⁵ man on lyve, —
 If that I koude a faucon wel discryve, — 15,200
 That herde of swich another of fairnesse,
 As wel of plumage as of gentillesse
 Of shape, and al that myghte yrekened be.
 A faucon peregryn⁶ thanne semed she
 Of fremde⁷ land, and everemoore as she stood,
 She swowneth now and now for lakke of blood,
 'Til wel neigh is she fallen fro the tree.

This faire kynges doghter, Canacee,
 That on hir fynger baar the queynte ryng
 Thurgh which she understood wel every thyng
 That any fowel may in his leden⁸ seyn, 15,211
 And koude answeren hym in his ledene ageyn,

¹ Very dry. ² Not in Elles. MS. ³ Shrieked. ⁴ Pricked. ⁵ Elles. MS. has "nevere man yet on." ⁶ Wandering. ⁷ Foreign. ⁸ Speech. Cf. *Piers Plowman*, xii. 253. (Italian, *latino*, theme, discourse.)

For Goddes love com fro the tree adoun, 15,240
 And as I am a kynges doghter trewe,
 If that I verrailly the cause knewe
 Of youre disese,¹ if it lay in my myght
 I wolde amenden it er that it were nyght,
 As wisly helpe me grete ² God of kynde !
 And herbes shal I right ynowe yfynde
 To heele with ³ youre hurtes hastily."

Tho⁴ shrighthe this faucon yet moore pitously
 Than ever she dide, and fil to grounde anon,
 And lith aswowne, deed, and lyk a stoon,
 Til Canacee hath in hire lappe hire take 15,251
 Un-to the tyme she gan of swough awake ;
 And after that she of hir swough gan breyde
 Right in hir haukes ledene thus she seyde :
 "That pitee renneth soone in gentil herte,⁵ —
 Feelynge his similitude in peynes smerte, —
 Is preved al day, as men may see
 As wel by werk as by auctoritee ;⁶
 For gentil herte kitheth ⁷ gentillesse.
 I se wel that ⁸ ye han of my distresse 15,260
 Compassioun, my faire Canacee,
 Of verray wommanly benignytee (10,800 T.)
 That nature in youre principles hath set ;
 But for noon hope for to fare the bet,⁹
 But for obeye un-to youre herte free,

¹ Discomfort. ² Elles. MS. has "the grete." As truly help me the great God of nature. ³ "To heele with youre hurtes" is a common construction in Early English, meaning "to heal your hurts with." ⁴ Then. ⁵ This line is a favorite one with Chaucer ; cf. II 1761, 5082, 14,322, and *Legende of Goode Women*, l. 503. ⁶ "Auctoritee" is frequently used by Chaucer, and means "the statements of good authors." ⁷ Makes known. ⁸ Not in Elles. MS. ⁹ Better.

And for to maken othere be war by me,
 As by the whelpe chasted ¹ is the leoun ; ²
 Right for that cause and that ³ conclusioun,
 Whil that I have a leyser and a space
 Myn harm I wol confessen er I pace." 15,270
 And evere whil that oon hir sorwe tolde
 That oother weepe as she to water wolde,
 'Til that the faucon bad hire to be stille,
 And with a syk right thus she seyde hir wille.

"That I was bred, alas ! that harde day, —
 And fostred in a roche of marbul gray
 So tendrely that no thyng eyled me ;
 I nyste nat what was adversitee
 Til I koude flee ful hye under the sky.
 Tho dwelte a tercelet ⁴ me faste by 15,280
 That semed welle ⁵ of alle gentillesse ;
 Al were he ful of tresoun and falsnesse
 It was so wrapped under humble cheere,
 And under hewe of trouthe in swich manere,
 Under plesance, and under bisy peyne,
 That I ne koude han wend he koude fevne.
 So depe in greyn he dyed his colours.
 Right as a serpent hit ⁶ hym under floures
 Til he may seen his tyme for to byte,
 Right so this god of love, this ypocryte, 15,290
 Dooth so hise cerymonyes and obeisaunces,

¹ Chastened. ² That is, an insignificant offender punished as a warning to a greater one ; as the proverb has it, " Beat the dog before [in the sight of] the lion." Cf. *Othello*, act ii., sc. 3, l. 272, where Iago says : " Beat his offenseless dog to affright an imperious lion." ³ Elles. MS. has " for that." ⁴ A male peregrine (wandering) falcon. ⁵ Spring. ⁶ Hideth.

And kepeth in semblant alle hise observaunces
 That sowneth in-to gentillesse of love.
 As in a tounge is al the faire above,
 And under is the corps, swich as ye woot,
 Swich was the ypocrite bothe coold and hoot,
 And in this wise he served his entente,
 That save the feend, noon wiste what he mente,
 Til he so longe hadde wopen and compleyned,
 And many a yeer his service to me feyned
 Til that myn herte, to pitous and to nyce,
 Al innocent of his corowned ¹ malice, 15,302
 For-fered of his deeth, as thoughte me,
 Upon hise othes and his seuretee,
 Graunted hym love up-on this condicioun,
 That everemoore myn honour and renoun
 Were saved, bothe privee and apert ; ²
 This is to seyn, that after his desert, 15,308
 I gaf hym al myn herte and my thoght, —
 God woot, and he, that otherwise noght, —
 And took his herte in chaunge for myn for ay ;
 But sooth is seyde, goon sithen many a day,
 ‘A trewe wight and a theef thenken nat oon ;’
 And whan he saugh the thyng so fer ygoon
 That I hadde graunted hym fully my love,
 In swich a gyse as I have seyde above,
 And geven hym my trewe herte as free
 As he swoor that ³ he gaf his herte to me ;
 Anon this tigre ful of doublenesse 15,319
 Fil on hise knees with so devout humblesse,

¹ Capital. ² In private and public. ³ Not in Elles. MS.

With so heigh reverence, and as by his cheere
 So lyk a gentil love of manere, (10,860 T.
 So ravysshed as it semed for the joye
 That nevere Jason,¹ ne Parys of Troye, —
 Jason? Certes, ne noon oother man
 Syn Lameth was, that alderfirst bigan
 To loven two, as writen folk biforn,
 Ne nevere syn the firste man was born,
 Ne koude man, by twenty thousand part,
 Countrefete the sophymes of his art, 15,330
 Ne were worthy unbokelen his galoche
 Ther doublenesse or feynyng sholde approche
 Ne so koude thanke a wight as he dide me!
 His manere was an hevene for to see
 Til any womman were she never so wys,
 So peynted he, and kembde at point-devys,²
 As wel hise wordes as his contenaunce;
 And I loved hym for his obeisaunce,
 And for the trouthe I demed in his herte,
 That if so were that any thyng hym smerte,
 Al were it never so lite,³ and I it wiste, 15,341
 Me thoughte I felte deeth myn herte twiste;
 And shortly, so ferforth this thyng is went,
 That my wyl was his willes instrument, —
 This is to seyn, my wyl obeyed his wyl
 In alle thyng, as fer as resoun fil,
 Kepyng the boundes of my worshipe evere;
 Ne nevere hadde I thyng so lief ne lever

¹ From Hengwrt MS. Elles. MS. has "Troilus," not an apt illustration. ² Combed with great exactness. ³ Little.

As hym, God woot ! ne nevere shal namo.
 This lasteth lenger than a yeer or two 15,350
 That I supposed of hym noght but good ;
 But finally thus atte laste it stood
 That Fortune wolde that he moste twynne
 Out of that place which that I was inne.
 Wher¹ me was wo, that is no questioun ;
 I kan nat make of it discripsioun,
 For o thyng dare I tellen boldely,
 I knowe what is the peyne of deeth ther by ;
 Swich harme I felte for I ne myghte bileve !²
 So on a day of me he took his leve 15,360
 So sorwefully eek that I wende verrailly
 That he had felt as muche harm as I, (10,900 r.)
 Whan that I herde hym speke and saugh his
 hewe ;
 But nathelees I thoughte he was so trewe,
 And eek that he repaire sholde ageyn
 With-inne a litel while, sooth to seyn,
 And resoun wolde eek that he moste go
 For his honour, as ofte it happeth so,
 That I made vertu of necessitee,
 And took it wel, syn that it moste be. 15,370
 As I best myghte I hidde fro hym my sorwe
 And took hym by the hond, Seint John to
 borwe,³
 And seyde hym thus : ' Lo, I am youres al ;
 Beth swich as I to yow have been and shal.'
 What he answerde it nedeth noght reherce ;

¹ Whether. ² Because I might not trust him. ³ Pledge, security

Who kan sey bet than he, who kan do werse ?
 Whan he hath al yseyd, thanne hath he doon.
 ' Therefore bihoveth hire a ful long spoon ¹
 That shal ete with a feend,' thus herde I seye,
 So atte laste he moste forth his weye, 15,38c
 And forth he fleeth til he cam ther hym leste.
 Whan it cam hym to purpos for to reste,
 I trowe he hadde thilke text ² in mynde,
 That ' Alle thyng repeyringe to his kynde
 Gladeth hym self,' — thus seyn men, as I gesse.
 Men loven of propre kynde ³ newefangelnesse,
 As briddes doon that men in cages fede ; ⁴
 For though thou nyght and day take of hem
 hede,

And strawe hir cage faire, and softe as silk,
 And geve hem sugre, hony, breed and milk,
 Yet right anon as that his dore is uppe, 15,391
 He with his feet wol spurne adoun his cuppe,
 And to the wode he wole, and wormes ete ;
 So newefangel been they of hire mete
 And loven novelrie of propre kynde ;
 No gentillesse of blood ne ⁵ may hem bynde.

“ So ferde this tercelet, allas, the day !
 Though he were gentil born, and ⁵ fressh and
 gay,
 And goodlich for to seen, and ⁵ humble and
 free.

He saugh up-on a tyme a kyte flee, 15,400

¹ Cf. *Comedy of Errors*, act iv., sc. 3, ll. 61, 64; and *Tempest*, act ii. sc. 2, l. 101. ² Cf. Boethius, book iii., met. 2. ³ Own nature, i. e. peculiar bent. ⁴ Cf. l. 18,044. ⁵ Not in Elles. MS.

And sodeynly he loved this kyte so
 That al his love is clene fro me ago,
 And hath his trouthe falsed in this wyse.
 Thus hath the kyte my love in hire servyse,
 And I am lorn with-outen remedie."
 And with that word this faucon gan to crie,
 And swowned eft in Canacees barm.¹

Greet was the sorwe for the haukes harm
 That Canacee and alle hir wommen made ;
 They nyste hou they myghte the faucon glade
 But Canacee hom bereth hire in hir lappe,
 And softly in plastres gan hire wrappe, 15,412
 Ther as she with hire beek hadde hurt hi
 selve. (10,951 T.)

Now kan nat Canacee but herbes delve
 Out of the ground, and make salves newe
 Of herbes precieuse, and fyne of hewe,
 To heelen with this hauk ; fro day to nyght
 She dooth hire bisynesse and hire fulle myght,
 And by hire beddes heed she made a mewe
 And covered it with veluettes blewe 15,421
 In signe of trouthe that is in wommen sene,
 And al with oute the mewe is peynted grene,
 In which were peynted² alle thise false fowles,
 As beth thise tidyves,³ tercelettes and owles ;
 And pyes on hem, for to crie and chyde,
 Right for despit, were peynted hem bisyde.

Thus lete I Canacee, hir hauk kepyng,

Lap. ² Elles. MS. has "there were ypcynted." ³ An incons-
 tant bird. Cf. *Legende of Goode Women*, l. 154.

I wol namoore as now speke of hir ryng
 Til it come eft to purpos for to seyn
 How that this faucon gat hire love ageyn, —
 Repentant as the storie telleth us, — 15,43.
 By mediacioun of Cambalus
 The kynges sone, of which that ¹ I yow tolde ;
 But hennes forth I wol my proces holde
 To speken of adventures and of batailles
 That nevere yet was herd so greet mervailles.

First wol I telle yow of Cambyuskan,
 That in his tyme many a citee wan ;
 And after wol I speke of Algarsif,
 How that he wan Theodera to his wif, 15,44c
 For whom ful ofte in greet peril he was,
 Ne hadde he ben holpe by the steede of bras ;
 And after wol I speke of Cambalo ²
 That faught in lystes with the bretheren two
 For Canacee, er that he myghte hire wyne ;
 An ther I lefte I wol ageyn bigynne. (10,984 T.)

THIRD PART.

Appollo whirleth up his chaar so hye
 Til that the god Mercurius hous, the slye ³ —

¹ Not in Elles. MS. ² Not Cambalus, but a lover of Canacee.
³ Here the story abruptly concludes. It is apparent that the second part never received Chaucer's revision. Gemini was the "manifestation" of Mercury. The expression is intended to indicate the passage of time.

Heere folwen the wordes of the Frankelyn to the Squier, and the wordes of the Hoost to the Frankelyn.

“In feith, Squier, thow hast thee wel yquit
And gentilly I preise wel thy wit,” (10,986 r.)
Quod the Frankelyn, “considerynge thy yowthe
So feelyngly thou spekest, sire, I allowe ¹ the !
As to my doom ther is noon that is heere
Of eloquence that shal be thy peere, 15,454
If that thou lyve ! God geve thee good chaunce,
And in vertu sende thee continuaunce ;
For of thy speche I have greet deyntee.
I have a sone, and, by the Trinitee !
I hadde levere than twenty pound worth lond,
Though it right now were fallen in myn hond,
He were a man of swich discrecioun 15,461
As that ye been ; fy on possessioun,
But if a man be vertuous with al !
I have my sone snybbed ² and yet shal,
For he to vertu listeth nat entende, ³ (11,001 t.)
But for to pleye at dees, and to despende
And lese al that he hath, is his usage ;
And he hath levere talken with a page,
Than to comune with any gentil wight
There he myghte lerne gentillesse aright.”

“Straw for youre ‘gentillesse,’ ” quod our
Hoost. 15,471

¹ Praise. ² Snubbed, corrected. ³ Cares not to apply himself.

"What! Frankeleyn, *pardee*, sire, wel thou
woost

That ech of yow moot tellen atte leste
A tale or two or breken his biheste."

"That knowe I wel, sire," quod the Franke-
leyn,

"I prey yow haveth me nat in desdeyn
Though to this man I speke a word or two."

"Telle on thy tale, with outen wordes mo!"

"Gladly, sire Hoost," quod he, "I wole
obeye

Un-to your wyl; now herkneth what I seye.

I wol yow nat contrarien in no wyse 15,481

As fer as that my wittes wol suffyse;

I prey to God that it may plesen yow, (11,019 T.)

Thanne woot I wel that it is good ynow."

The Prologe of the Frankeleyns Tale.

Thise olde, gentil Britons, in hir dayes,
Of diverse aventures maden Layes,¹ (11,022 T.)
Rymeyed² in hir firste Briton tonge,
Whiche Layes with hir instrumentz they songe,
Or elles redden hem for hir plesaunce,
And oon of hem have I in remembraunce,
Which I shal seyn with good wyl as I kan.

But, sires, by cause I am a burel³ man, 15,492

¹ The Breton Lay to which the Franklin professes to be indebted is not known to be extant. The story had been used by Boccaccio though with different accessories, in the fifth novel of the tenth day of the *Decamerone*. ² Rhymed. ³ Lay.

At my bigynnyng first I yow biseche,
 Have me excused of my rude speche.
 I lerned nevere rethorik certeyn ;
 Thyng that I speke it moot be bare and p^r yn.
 I sleepe nevere on the Mount of Pernaso,
 Ne lerned Marcus Tullius Scithero.
 Colours ne knowe I none, with outen dred,
 But swiche colours as growen in the mede,
 Or elles swiche as men dye or peynte. 15,4
 Colours of rethoryke been to queynte ;
 My spirit feeleth noght of swich mateere,
 But if yow list my tale shul ye heere.

Heere bigynneth The Frankeleyns Tale.

In Armorik, that called is Britayne,
 Ther was a knyght that loved and dide his
 payne (11,042 T.)
 To serve a lady in his beste wise ; 15,507
 And many a labour, many a greet emprise,
 He for his lady wroghte, er she were wonne ;
 For she was oon the faireste under sonne,
 And eek therto come of so heigh kynrede,
 That wel unnethes dorste this knyght for drede
 Telle hire his wo, his peyne, and his distresse ;
 But atte laste she for his worthynesse,
 And namely for his meke obeysaunce,
 Hath swich a pitee caught of his penaunce,
 That pryvely she fil of his accord, (11,053 T.)
 To take hym for hir housbonde and hir lord,

Of swich lordshipe as men han over hir wyves,
 And for to lede the moore in blisse hir lyves,
 Of his free wyl he swoor hire as a knyght,
 That nevere in al his lyf, he day ne nyght
 Ne sholde up-on hym take no maistrie 15,523
 Agayn hir wyl, ne kithe¹ hire jalousie ;
 But hire obeye and folwe hir wyl in al,
 As any love-re to his lady shal,
 Save that the name of soveraynetee,
 That wolde he have, for shame of his degree.

She thanked hym and with ful greet hum-
 blesse,

She seyde, " Sire, sith of youre gentillesse
 Ye profre me to have so large a reyne, 15,531
 Ne wolde nevere God bitwixe us tweyne,
 As in my gilt, were outh² werre or stryf.
 Sire, I wol be youre humble, trewe wyf ;
 Have heer my trouthe, til that myn herte
 breste ; "

Thus been they bothe in quiete and in reste.

For o thyng, sires, sauflly dar I seye,
 That freendes everych oother moot obeye,
 If they wol longe holden compaignye. 15,539
 Love wol nat been constreyned by maistrye.
 Whan maistrie comth, the god of love, anon,
 Beteth hise wynges and, farewell, he is gon !
 Love is a thyng as any spirit free.
 Wommen of kynde³ desiren libertee,
 And nat to been constreyned as a thral ;

¹ Show. ² Either. ³ Nature.

And so doon men, if I sooth seyen shal.
 Looke, who that is moost pacient in love,
 He is at his advantage al above.¹
 Pacience is an heigh vertu, certeyn, 15,549
 For it venquysseth, as thise clerkes seyn,
 Thynges that rigour sholde nevere atteyne;
 For every word men may nat chide or pleyne.²
 Lerneth to suffre, or elles so moot I goon,
 Ye shul it lerne, wher so ye wole or noon;
 For in this world, certein, ther no wight is
 That he ne dooth or seith som tyme amys.
 Ire, siknesse, or constellacioun,³ (11,093 T.)
 Wyn, wo, or chaungynge of complexioun,⁴
 Causeth ful ofte to doon amys or speken.
 On every wrong a man may nat be wreken;
 After the tyme moste be temperaunce 15,561
 To every wight that kan on ⁵ governaunce;
 And therfore hath this wise, worthy knyght, —
 To lyve in ese, — suffrance hire bihight,⁶
 And she to hym ful wisly⁷ gan to swere
 That nevere sholde ther be defaute in here.

Heere may men seen an humble, wys accord;
 Thus hath she take hir servant and hir lord, —
 Servant in love, and lord in mariage, —
 Thanne was he bothe in lordshipe and serv-
 age. 15,570

Servage? nay, but in lordshipe above;
 Sith he hath bothe his lady and his love;

¹ Superior. ² Complain. ³ Influence of the heavenly bodies. The whole temperament. ⁵ Understands. ⁶ Promised. ⁷ Surely.

His lady, certes, and his wyf also,
 The which that lawe of love acordeth to ;
 And whan he was in this prosperitee
 Hoom with his wyf he gooth to his contree,
 Nat fer fro Pedmark,¹ ther his dwellyng was,
 Wher as he lyveth in blisse and in solas.

Who koude telle, but he hadde wedded be,
 The joye, the ese, and the prosperitee 15,58c
 That is bitwixe ² an housbonde and his wyf ?

A yeer and moore lasted this blisful lyf,
 Til that the knyght of which I speke of thus,
 That of Kayrrud³ was cleped Arveragus,
 Shoope hym to goon and dwelle a yeer or
 tweyne

In Engelond, that cleped was eek Briteyne,
 To seke in armes worshiþe and honour,
 For al his lust he sette in swich labour ;
 And dwelled there two yeer, — the book seith
 thus.

Now wol I stynten of this Arveragus, 15,59a
 And speken I wole of Dorigene his wyf,
 That loveth hire housbonde as hire hertes lyf ;
 For his absence wepeth she and siketh,
 As doon thise noble wyves whan hem liketh ;
 She moorneth, waketh, wayleth, fasteth, pleyn
 eth ;

Desir of his presence hire so distreyneth,
 That al this wyde world she sette at noght.

¹ ~~Ped~~ mark in Brittany. ² Cf. l. 13 676. ³ Cairrud, red city. ~~Some~~
 MSS. read "kynrede."

Hire freendes, whiche that knewe hir hevvy
thoght,

Conforten hire in al that ever they may.

They prechen hire, they telle hire nyght and
day, 15,600

That causelees she sleeth hir self, allas !

And every confort possible in this cas

They doon to hire with all hire bisynesse,

Al for to make hire leve hire hevynesse.

By proces, as ye knowen everichoon,

Men may so longe graven in a stoon

Til som figure ther-inne emprented be.

So longe han they comforted hire, til she

Receyved hath, by hope and by resoun,

The emprentyng of hire consolacioun, 15,610

Thurgh which hir grete sorwe gan aswage ;

She may nat alwey duren in swich rage.

And eek Arveragus in al this care

Hath sent hire lettres hoom of his welfare ;

And that he wol come hastily agayn ; (11,151 T.)

Or elles hadde this sorwe hir herte slayn.

Hire freendes sawe hir sorwe gan to slake,

And preye hire on knees, for Goddes sake,

To come and romen hire in compaignye,

Away to dryve hire derke fantasye ; 15,620

And finally she graunted that requeste,

For wel she saugh that it was for the beste.

Now stood hire castel faste by the see,

And often with hire freendes walketh shee,

Hire to disporte up-on the bank an heigh,

Where as she many a shipe and barge seigh
 Seillynge hir cours where as hem liste go ;
 But thanne was that a parcel¹ of hire wo,
 For to hir-self ful ofte " Allas ! " seith she,
 " Is ther no shipe, of so manye as I se 15,630
 Wol bryngen hom my lord ? Thanne were myn
 herte

Al warissched ² of hise bittre peynes smerte."

Another tyme ther wolde she sitte and
 thynke,

And caste hir eyen downward fro the brynke ;
 But whan she saugh the grisly rokkes blake,
 For verray feere so wolde hir herte quake
 That on hire feet she myghte hire noght sus-
 tene ;

Thanne wolde she sitte adoun upon the grene,
 And pitously in to the see biholde, 15,639
 And seyn right thus, with sorweful sikes colde

" Eterne God, that thurgh thy purveiaunce,
 Ledest the world by certein governaunce,
 In ydel, as men seyn, ye no thyng make ; .
 But, Lord, thise grisly, feendly rokkes blake,
 That semen rather a foul confusioun
 Of werk than any fair creacioun
 Of swich a parfit wys God, and a stable, —
 Why han ye wrought this werk unresonable ?
 For by this werk south, north, ne west, ne east
 Ther nys yfostred man ne bryd ne beast ;
 It dooth no good, to my wit, but anoyeth.³ 15,65

¹ Portion (Fr. *parcelle*, Lat. *particula*). ² Cured. ³ Harmeth

Se ye nat, Lord, how mankynde it destroyeth ?
 An hundred thousand bodyes of mankynde
 Han rokkes slayn, al be they nat in mynde,
 Which mankynde is so fair part of thy werk,
 That thou it madest lyk to thyn owene merk.¹

"Thanne semed it ye hadde a greet chiertee²
 Toward mankynde, but how thanne may it
 bee,

That ye swiche meenes make it to destroyen,
 Whiche meenes do no good, but evere anoyen ?
 I woot wel clerkes wol seyn as hem leste,
 By argumentz, that al is for the beste, 15,662
 Though I ne³ kan the causes nat yknowe ;
 But, thilke God that made wynd to blowe,
 As kepe my lord ; this my conclusioun.
 To clerkes lete I al this disputisoun ; (11,202 T.)
 But wolde God that alle thise rokkes blake
 Were sonken in-to helle for his sake.

Thise rokkes sleen myn herte for the feere."
 Thus wolde she seyn with many a pitous teere.

Hire freendes sawe that it was no disport
 To romen by the see, but disconfort, 15,672
 And shopen⁴ for to pleyen somwher elles.
 They leden hire by ryveres, and by welles,
 And eek in othere places delitables ;
 They dauncen, and thev pleyen at ches and
 tables.⁵

So on a day, right in the morwe tyde,

¹ Image. ² Charity. ³ Not in Elles. MS. ⁴ Arranged. ⁵ Back
 gammon.

Un-to a gardyn that was ther bisyde,
 In which that they hadde maad hir ordinaunce
 Of vitaille, and of oother purveiaunce, 15,680
 They goon and pleye hem al the longe day ;
 And this was in the sixte morwe of May,
 Which May hadde peynted with his softe
 shoures

This gardyn, ful of leves and of floures,
 And craft of mannes hand so curiously
 Arrayed hadde this gardyn, trewely,
 That nevere was ther gardyn of swich prys¹
 But if it were the verray Paradys.
 The odour of floures and the fresshe sighte
 Wolde han makid any herte lighte 15,690
 That evere was born, but if to greet siknesse,
 Or to greet sorwe, helde it in distresse,
 So ful it was of beautee with plesaunce.

At after dyner gonne² they to daunce,
 And synge also, save Dorigen allone,
 Which made alwey hir compleint and hir
 moone,³

For she ne saugh hym on the daunce go
 That was hir housbonde, and hir love also ;
 But nathelees she moste a tyme abyde
 And with good hope lete hir sorwe slyde. 15,700

Up-on this daunce, amonges othere men,
 Daunced a squier biforn Dorigen,
 That fressher was, and jolyer of array,
 As to my doom, than is the monthe of May ;

¹ Praise. ² Began. ³ Moan.

He syngeth, daunceth, passynge any man
That is, or was, sith that the world bigan.
Ther-with he was, if men sholde hym discryve,
Oon of the beste farynge man on lyve,
Yong, strong, right vertuous, and riche and
wys, 15,709

And wel biloved, and holden in greet prys.
And, shortly, if the sothe I tellen shal,
Unwityng of this Dorigen at al
This lusty squier, servant to Venus,
Which that ycleped was Aurelius, (11,250 r.)
Hadde loved hire best of any creature
Two yeer and moore, as was his aventure ;
But nevere dorste he telle¹ hire his grev-
aunce ;

With outen coppe² he drank al his penaunce.
He was despeyred, no thyng dorste he seye,
Save in his songes somewhat wolde he wreye³
His wo, as in a general compleynyng ; 15,721
He seyde, he lovede, and was biloved no thyng.
Of swich matere made he manye layes,
Songes, compleintes, roundels, virelayes ;
How that he dorste nat his sorwe telle,
But langwissheth as a furye⁴ dooth in helle ;
And dye he moste, he seyde, as diide Ekko
For Narcisus, that dorste nat telle hir wo.
In oother manere than ye heere me seye
Ne dorste he nat to hire his wo biwreye, 15,730

¹ Eiles. MS. has "tellen." ² Measure. ³ Bewray. ⁴ Tyrwhitt suggests that "fende" would here give a meaning, whereas "furye" gives none, or little

Save that paraventure som tyme at daunces,
 Ther yonge folk kepen hir observaunces,
 It may wel be he looked on hir face
 In swich a wise as man that asketh grace ;
 But no thyng wiste she of his entente ;
 Nathelees it happed, er they thennes wente,
 By-cause that he was hire neighebour,
 And was a man of worshipec and honour,
 And hadde yknowen hym of tyme yore,
 They fille in speche and forthe moore and
 moore 15,740

Un-to this purpos drough Aurelius.

And whan he saugh his tyme he sayde thus :

“Madame,” quod he, “by God that this
 world made,

So that I wiste it myghte youre herte glade,¹

I wolde that day that youre Arveragus

Wente over the see, that I, Aurelius,

Hadde went ther nevere I sholde have come
 agayn ;

For wel I woot my servyce is in vayn,

My gerdoun is but brestyng² of myn herte.

Madame, reweth upon my peynes smerte, 15,750

For with a word ye may me sleen or save ;

Heere at youre feet God wolde that I were
 grave !

I have,³ as now, no leyser moore to seye, —

Have mercy, sweete, or ye wol do me deye !”

She gan to looke up-on Aurelius :

¹ Gladden. ² Bursting. ³ Elles. MS. has “ne have.”

“TAAK THIS FOR FYNAL ANSWERE!” 39

“Is this your wyl,” quod she, “and sey ye thus?

Nevere erst,” quod she, “ne wiste I what ye mente ; (11,293 T.)

But now, Aurelie, I knowe youre entente, —

By thilke God that gat me soule and lyf!

Ne shal I nevere been untrewe wyf, 15,760

In word ne werk, as fer as I have wit,

I wol been his to whom that I am knyht!

Taak this for fynal answer, as of me ;”

But after that in pley thus seyde she :

“Aurelie,” quod she, “by heighe God above!

Yet wolde I graunte yow to been youre love,

Syn I yow se so pitously complayne.

Looke, what day that endelong¹ Britayne,

Ye remoeve alle the rokkes, stoon by stoon,

That they ne lette shipe ne boot to goon, —

I seye whan ye han maad the coost so clene

Of rokkes, that ther nys no stoon ysene, 15,772

Thanne wol I love yow best of any man.

Have heer my trouthe, in al that evere I kan!”

“Is ther noon oother grace in yow?” quod he.

“No, by that Lord,” quod she, “that maked me!

For wel I woot that it² shal never bityde.

Lat swiche folies out of youre herte slyde ;

What deyntee sholde a man han in his lyf

For to go love another mannes wyf, 15,780

¹ Along. ² The removal of the rocks.

That hath hir body whan so that hym lyketh?"
Aurelius ful ofte soore siketh.¹

Wo was Aurelie, whan that he this herde,
And with a sorweful herte he thus answerde :

"Maclame," quod he, "this were an impossi-
ble,

Thanne moot I dye of sodeyn deth horrible!"
And with that word he turned hym anon.

Tho coome hir othere freendes many oon,
And in the aleyes romeden up and down,
And no thyng wiste of this conclusioun ; 15,79c
But sodeynly bigonne revel newe,
Til that the brighte sonne loste his hewe,
For thorisonte hath reft the sonne his lyght, —
This is as muche to seye, as it was nyght ; ²
And hoom they goon in joye and in solas,
Save oonly wrecche Aurelius, allas !
He to his hous is goon with sorweful herte ;
He seeth he may nat fro his deeth asterte,³
Hym semed that he felte his herte colde.⁴
Up to the hevene hise handes he gan holde,
And on hise knowes ⁵ bare he sette hym down,
And in his ravyng seyde his orisoun. 15,802
For verray wo out of his wit he breyde,⁶
He nyste what he spak, but thus he seyde.
With pitous herte his pleynt hath he bigonne
Un-to the goddes, and first un-to the sonne.

He seyde, " Appollo, god and governour,

¹ Tyrwhitt places lines 15,777 to 15,782 before l. 15,775, which makes the meaning more clear. ² The Franklin was no poet. ³ E. tape. ⁴ Grow cold. ⁵ Knees. ⁶ Started.

Of every plaunte, herbe, tree and flour,
 That gevest after thy declinacioun
 To ech of hem his tyme and his sesoun, 15,810
 As thyn herberwe ¹ chaungeth lowe or heighe ;
 Lord Phebus, cast thy merciabie eighe
 On wrecche Aurelie, which am but lorn !
 Lo, lord, my lady hath my deeth y-sworn
 With oute gilt ; but thy benignytee (11,351 r.)
 Upon my dedly herte have som pitee ;
 For wel I woot, lord Phebus, if yow lest
 Ye may me helpen, save my lady, best.
 Now voucheth sauf that I may yow devyse
 How that I may been holpen and in what
 wyse. 15,820

“Youre blisful suster, Lucina the sheene,
 That of the see is chief goddesse and queene, —
 Though Neptunus have deitee in the see,
 Yet emperisse aboven hym is she, —
 Ye knowe wel, lord, that right as hir desir
 Is to be quyked,² and lightned of youre fir,
 For which she folweth yow ful bisily,
 Right so the see desireth naturelly
 To folwen hire, as she that is goddesse, 15,829
 Bothe in the see and ryveres moore and lesse.
 Wherefore, lord Phebus, this is my requeste,
 Do this miracle, or do myn herte breste :
 That now next at this opposicioun,
 Which in the signe shal be of the Leoun,
 As preieth hire ³ so greet a flood to brynge,

Mansion, in the heavens. ² Enlivened. ³ Pray her, *i. e.*, Luna

'That fyve fadme at the leeste it oversprynge
 The hyeste rokke in Armorik Briteyne ;
 And lat this flood endure yeres tweyne,
 Thanne certes to my lady may I seye, 15.839
 ' Holdeth youre heste, the rokkes been awaye.

“ Lord Phebus, dooth this miracle for me ;
 Preye hire she go no faster cours than ye ;
 I seye, preyeth your suster that she go
 No faster cours than ye thise yeres two,
 Thanne shal she been evene atte fulle alway,
 And spryng flood laste bothe nyght and day ;
 And, but she vouche-sauf in swich manere
 To graunte me my sovereyn lady deere,
 Prey hire to synken every rok adoun
 In-to hir owene dirke regioun 15,850
 Under the ground, ther Pluto dwelleth inne,
 Or nevere mo shal I my lady wyne.
 Thy temple in Delphos wol I barefoot seke, —
 Lord Phebus, se the teeris on my cheke,
 And of my peyne have som compassioun ! ”
 And with that word in swowne he fil adoun,
 And longe tyme he lay forth in a traunce.

His brother, which that knew of his pen-
 aunce,
 Up caughte hym, and to bedde he hath hym
 broght,
 Dispeyred in this torment and this thoght.
 Lete I this woful creature lye ; 15.861
 Chese he for me wher ¹ he wol lyve or dye.

¹ Elles. MS. reads “ wheither.”

Arveragus with heele and greet honour,
 As he that was of chivalrie the flour, (11,400 r)
 Is comen hoom, and othere worthy men.
 O, blisful artow now, thou Dorigen !
 That hast thy lusty housbonde in thyne armes,
 The fresshe knyght, the worthy man of armes,
 That loveth thee as his owene hertes lyf.
 No thyng list hym to been ymaginatyf, 15,870
 If any wight had spoke whil he was oute
 To hire of love, he hadde of it no doute.
 He noght entendeth to no swich mateere,
 But daunceth, justeth, maketh hire good cheere ;
 And thus in joye and blisse I lete hem dwelle,
 And of the sike Aurelius I wol yow telle.

In langour and in torment furyus,
 Two yeer and moore, lay wrecche Aurelyus
 Er any foot he myghte on erthe gon ;
 Ne confort in this tyme hadde he noon, 15,880
 Save of his brother, which that was a clerk.
 He knew of al this wo and al this werk,
 For to noon oother creature certeyn,
 Of this matere he dorste no word seyn ;
 Under his brest he baar it moore secree
 Than evere dide Pamphilus for Galathee.¹
 His brest was hool with oute for to sene,
 But in his herte ay was the arwe kene ;
 And wel ye knowe that of a sursanure²
 In surgerye is perilous the cure, 15,890

¹ In a Latin poem popular in Chaucer's day. Cf. l. 7168. ² A wound outwardly cured.

But¹ men myghte touche the arwe, or come
therby.

His brother weepe and wayled pryvely,
Til atte laste hym fil in remembraunce
That whiles he was at Orliens in Fraunce, —
As yonge clerkes, that been lykerous
To reden artes that been curious,
Seken in every halke and every herne²
Particuler sciences for to lerne, —
He hym remembred that upon a day,
At Orliens in studie, a book he say 15,900
Of magyk natureel, which his felawe,
That was that tyme a bacheler of lawe, —
Al were he ther to lerne another craft, —
Hadde prively upon his desk ylaft,
Which book spak muchel of the operaciouns
Touchynge the eighte and twenty mansiouns
That longen³ to the moone, and swich folye
As in oure dayes is nat worth a flye, —
For hooly chirches feith, in oure bileve,
Ne suffreth noon illusion us to greve; 15,910
And whan this book was in his remembraunce
Anon for joye his herte gan to daunce,
And to hym self he seyde pryvely, (11,449 T.)
“ My brother shal be warissed⁴ hastily,
For I am siker that ther be sciences
By whiche men maken diverse apparences,
Swiche as thise subtile tregetoures⁵ pleye;
For ofte at feestes have I wel herd seye

¹ Unless. ² Hole and corner. ³ Belong. ⁴ Cured. ⁵ Jugglery.

That tregetours with-inne an halle large
 Have maad come in a water and a barge,
 And in the halle rowen up and down. 15,921
 Somtyme hath semed come a grym leoun,
 And somtyme floures sprynge as in a mede ;
 Somtyme a vyne, and grapes white and rede ;
 Somtyme a castel, al of lym and stoon,
 And whan hym lyked voyded it anoon, —
 Thus semed it to every mannes sighte.
 Now thanne conclude I thus, that if I myghte
 At Orliens som oold felawe yfynde,
 That hadde this moones mansions in mynde,
 Or oother magyk natureel above,¹ 15,931
 He sholde wel make my brother han his love ;
 For with an apparence a clerk may make
 To mannes sighte that alle the rokkes blake
 Of Britaigne weren yvoyded everichon,
 And shippes by the brynke comen and gon ;
 And in swich forme enduren a wowke or two.
 Thanne were my brother warissshed of his wo,
 Thanne moste she nedes holden hire biheste,
 Or elles he shal shame hire atte leeste." 15,940

What sholde I make a lenger tale of this ?
 Un-to his brotheres bed he comen is,
 And swich confort² he gaf hym for to gon
 To Orliens, that he up stirte anon,
 And on his wey forthward thanne is he fare
 In hope for to been lissed³ of his care.

¹ Supernatural. ² Strength of purpose *Con.* intensive, *fortis*,
 strong. ³ Eased.

Whan they were come almoost to that citee,
 But if it were a two furlong or thre,
 A yong clerk romynge by hym-self they mette
 Which that in Latyn thriftily hem grette, 15,950
 And after that he seyde a wonder thyng :
 "I knowe," quod he, "the cause of youre
 comyng," —

And er they ferther any foote wente,
 He tolde hem al that was in hire entente.

This Briton clerk hym asked of felawes
 The whiche that he had knowe in olde dawes ;¹
 And he answerde hym that they dede were,
 For which he weep ful ofte many a teere.

Doun of his hors Aurelius lighte anon,
 And forth with this magicien is he gon 15,960
 Hoom to his hous, and maden hem wel at ese ;
 Hem lakked no vitaille that myghte hem plese,
 So wel arrayed hous as ther was oon
 Aurelius in his lyf saugh nevere noon.

He shewed hym,² er he wente to sopeer,
 Forestes, parkes ful of wilde deer ; (11,502 r.)
 Ther saugh he hertes with hir hornes hye,
 The gretteste that were evere seyn with eye, —
 He saugh of hem an hondred slayn with
 houndes, 15,969
 And somme with arwes blede of bittre woundes.
 He saugh, whan voyded were thise wilde deer,³

¹ Days. ² It was supposed, even by the well-informed, that "nigromancers" were actually able to effect optical illusions of this sort. Froissart gravely gives instances in which castles were lost and won by means of magic. ³ Beasts (Ger. *thier*, animal). Cf. *King Lear* act iii., sc. 4, l. 143.

Thise fauconers upon a fair ryver,
That with hir haukes han the heroun slayn.
Tho saugh he knyghtes justyng in a playn,
And after this he dide hym swich plesaunce
That he hym shewed his lady on a daunce,
On which hym self he daunced, as hym
thoughte ;

And whan this maister that this magyk wroughte
Saught it was tyme, he clapte hise handes two,
And, farewell ! al oure revel was ago. 15,980
And yet remoeved they nevere out of the hous
Whil they saugh al this sighte merveillous,
But in his studie, ther as hise bookes be,
They seten stille, and no wight but they thre.

To hym this maister called his squier,
And seyde hym thus : “ Is redy oure soper ?
Almoost an houre it is, I undertake,
Sith I yow bad oure soper for to make,
Whan that thise worthy men wenten with me
In-to my studie ther as my bookes be.” 15,990

“ Sire,” quod this squier, “ whan it liketh yow
It is al redy, though ye wol right now.”
“ Go we thanne soupe,” quod he, “ as for the
beste ;

This amorous folk som tyme moote han hir
reste.”

At after soper fille they in trettee
What somme sholde this maistres gerdoun be
To remoeven alle the rokkes of Britayne,
And eek from Gerounde to the mouth of Sayne.

He made it straunge, and swoor, so God
hym save !

Lasse than a thousand pound he wolde nat
have, 16,000

Ne gladly for that somme he wolde nat goon.

Aurelius, with blisful herte anoon,

Answerde thus : " Fy on a thousand pound !

This wyde world, which that men seye is round,
I wolde it geve, if I were lord of it !

This bargayn is ful dryve, for we been knyht.

Ye shal be payed trewely, by my trouthe,

But looketh now, for no negligence or slouthe

Ye tarie us heere no lenger than to morwe."

"Nay," quod this clerk, " have heer my feith
to borwe." 16,010

To bedde is goon Aurelius whan hym leste,

And wel ny al that nyght he hadde his reste.

What for his labour, and his hope of blisse,

His woful herte of penaunce hadde a lisse.¹

Upon the morwe, whan that it was day,

To Britaigne tooke they the righte way, —

Aurelius and this magicien bisyde ; (11,553 T.)

And been descended ther they wolde abyde ;

And this was, as thise bookes me remembre,

The colde, frosty sesoun of Decembre. 16,020

Phebus wox old, and hewed lyk latoun,²

That in his hoote declynacioun

Shoon as the burned gold, with stremes brighte

But now in Capricorn adoun he lighte,

¹ Ease. ² Colored like brass.

Where as he shoon ful pale, I dar wel seyn.
 The bittre frostes with the sleet and reyn
 Destroyed hath the grēne in every yerd ;¹
 Janus sit by the fyr with double berd,
 And drynketh of his bugle horn the wyn ;
 Biforn hym stant brawn of the tusked swyn,
 And "*Nowel*"² crieth every lusty man. 16,031

Aurelius in al that evere he kan
 Dooth to his maister chiere and reverence,
 And preyeth hym to doon his diligence
 To bryngen hym out of his peynes smerte,
 Or with a swerd that he wolde slitte his herte.

This subtil clerk swich routhe had of this
 man,
 That nyght and day he spedde hym that he
 kan

To wayten³ a tyme of his conclusioun,
 This is to seye, to maken illusioun 16,040
 By swich an apparence or jogelrye, —
 I ne kan no termes of astrologye, —
 That she and every wight sholde wene and
 seye

That of Britaigne the rokkes were aweye,
 Or ellis they were sonken under grounde.
 So atte laste he hath his tyme yfounde
 To maken hise japes and his wrecchednesse
 Of swich a superstitious cursednesse.
 Hise tables Tolletanes⁴ forth he brought
 Ful wel corrected, neither lakked nought,

¹ Branch (literally, rod). ² Christmas. ³ Watch. ⁴ Toledo tables.

Neither his collect,¹ ne hise expans² yeeris,
 Ne hise rootes, ne hise othere geeris, 16,051
 As been his centris, and hise argumentz,
 And hise proporcioneles convenientz³
 For hise equacions in every thyng ;
 And by his eighte speere in his wirkyng
 He knew ful wel how fer Alnath⁴ was shove
 Fro the heed of thilke fixe Aries above,
 That in the nynte speere considered is ;
 Ful subtilly he hadde kalkuled al this. 16,060

Whan he hadde founde his firste mansioun
 He knew the remenaunt by proporcoun,
 And knew the arisyng of his moone weel,
 And in whos face, and terme, and everydeel,
 And knew ful weel the moones mansioun
 Acordaunt to his operacioun ; (11,602 T.)
 And knew also hise othere observaunces,
 For swiche illusiouns and swiche meschaunces
 As hethen folk useden in thilke dayes ;
 For which no lenger maked he delayes ; 16,070
 But thurgh his magik for a wyke or tweye
 It semed that alle the rokkes were awaye.

Aurelius, which that yet despeired is
 Wher he shal han his love or fare amys,
 Awaiteth nyght and day on this myracle ;
 And whan he knew that ther was noon ob-
 stacle,
 That voyded were thise rokkes everychon,

¹ Certain sums of years, with the motions of the heavenly bodies.
² Certain single years. ³ Tables of proportional parts. ⁴ A star is
 the horn of Aries that named the first mansion of the moon.

Doun to hise maistres feet he fil anon,
 And seyde, "I, woful, wrecche Aurelius,
 Thanke yow, lord, and lady myn, Venus, 16,080
 That me han holpen fro my cares colde ;"
 And to the temple his wey forth hath he holde,
 Where as he knew he sholde his lady see ;
 And whan he saugh his tyme anon right hee,
 With dredful herte and with ful humble cheere,
 Salewed hath his sovereyn lady deere.

"My righte ¹ lady," quod this woful man,
 "Whom I moost drede, and love as I best kan,
 And lothest were of al this world displese,
 Nere it that I for yow have swich disese ²
 That I moste dyen heere at youre foot anon ;
 Noght wolde I telle how me is wo bigon, 16,092
 But certes, outhur moste I dye or pleyne.³
 Ye sle me giltelees for verray peyne,
 But of my deeth, thogh that ye have no routh,
 Avyseth yow, er that ye breke youre trouthe.
 Repenteth yow, for thilke God above,
 Er ye me sleen by cause that I yow love,
 For, madame, wel ye woot what ye han hight,⁴ —
 Nat that I chalange any thyng of right, 16,100
 Of yow, my sovereyn lady, but youre grace, —
 But in a gardyn yond, at swich a place,
 Ye woot right wel what ye bihighten me,
 And in myn hand youre trouthe pligheten ye
 To love me best, God woot ye seyde so,
 Al be that I unworthy be therto.

¹ Rightful. ² Discomfort. ³ Complaine. ⁴ Promised.

Madame, I speke it for the honour of yow,
 Moore than to save myn hertes lyf right now,
 I have do so as ye comanded me,
 And, if ye vouche sauf, ye may go see. 16,110
 Dooth as yow list, have youre biheste in mynde,
 For, quyk or deed, right there ye shal me fynde.
 In yow lith al to do me lyve or deye,
 But wel I woot the rokkes been aweye."

He taketh his leve and she astonied stood ;
 In al hir face nas a drope of blood, (11,652 T.)
 She wende nevere han come in swich a trappe !
 "Allas !" quod she, "that evere this sholde
 happe,

For wende I nevere by possibilitee,
 That swich a monstre or merveille myghte be ;
 It is agayns the proces of nature." 16,121
 And hoom she goth a sorweful creature, —
 For verray feere unnethe may she go.
 She wepeth, wailleth al a day or two,
 And swowneth, that it routhe was to see ;
 But why it was to no wight tolde shee,
 For out of towne was goon Arveragus.
 But to hir-self she spak, and seyde thus,
 With face pale and with ful sorweful cheer,
 In hire compleynt as ye shal after heere. 16,130

"Allas !" quod she, "on thee, Fortune, '
 pleyne,

That unwar wrapped hast me in thy cheyne,
 For which tescape woot I no socour,
 Save oonly deeth or dishonour.

Oon of thise two bihoveth me to chese,
 But nathelees yet have I levere to lese
 My lif, than of my body have a shame,
 Or knowe my selven fals, or lese my name ;
 And with my deth I may be quyt, ywis ;
 Hath ther nat many a noble wyf er this, 16,146
 And many a mayde, yslayn hir self, allas !
 Rather than with hir body doon trespas ?

"Yis, certes, lo, thise stories beren witnesse
 Whan Thretty Tirauntz ful of cursednesse
 Hadde slayn Phidoun, in Atthenes at feste,
 They comanded hise doghtres for tareste,
 And bryngen hem biforn hem in despit,
 Al naked, to fulfille hir foul delit ;
 And in hir fadres blood they made hem daunce
 Upon the pavement, — God geve hem mys-
 chaunce ! 16,150

For which thise woful maydens, ful of drede,
 Rather than they wolde lese hir maydenhede
 They prively been stirt in to a welle,
 And dreynte hem selven, as the bookes telle.¹

"They of Mecene leete enquere and seke,
 Of Lacedomye, fifty maydens eke,
 On whiche they wolden doon hir lecherye,
 But was ther noon of al that compaignye
 That she nas slayn, and with a good entente
 Chees rather for to dye, than assente 16,160
 To been oppressed of hir maydenhede.
 Why sholde I thanne to dye been in drede ?

¹ The story of the drowning is preserved by St. Jerome, — *Contra Jovinianum*, — from which source also the following instances are drawn.

“Lo, eek the tiraunt Aristoclides, (11,699 v.,
 That loved a mayden heet Stymphalides,
 Whan that hir fader slayn was on a nyght,
 Un-to Dianes temple goth she right,
 And hente the ymage in hir handes two,
 Fro which ymage wolde she nevere go :
 No wight ne myghte hir handes of it arace
 Til she was slayn, right in the selve place.

“Now sith that maydens hadden swich despit
 To been defouled with mannes foul delit,
 Wel oghte a wyf rather hir selven slee 16,173
 Than be defouled, as it thynketh me.

“What shal I seyn of Hasdrubales wyf
 That at Cartage birafte hir self hir lyf?
 For whan she saugh that Romainys wan the
 toun,

She took hir children alle, and skipte adoun
 In to the fyr, and chees rather to dye
 Than any Romain dide hire vileynye. 16,180

“Hath nat Lucesse yslayn hir self, alas !
 At Rome, whan she oppressed was
 Of Tarquyn ? for hire thoughte it was a shame
 To lyven whan she hadde lost hir name.

“The sevene maydens of Melesie, also,
 Han slayn hem self for drede and wo,
 Rather than folk of Gawle hem sholde op-
 presse, —

Mo than a thousand stories, as I gesse, 16,188
 Koude I now telle as touchynge this mateere.

“Whan Habradate was slayn, his wyf so deere

Hirselven slow, and leet hir blood to glyde
In Habradates woundes depe and wyde,
And seyde, ‘My body, at the leeste way,
Ther shal no wight defoulen, if I may.’

“What sholde I mo ensamples heer-of sayn,
Sith that so manye han hem selven slayn
Wel rather than they wolde defouled be ?
I wol conclude that it is bet for me
To sleen my self than been defouled thus.
I wol be trewe un-to Arveragus, 16,200
Or rather sleen my self in some manere,
As dide Demociones doghter deere
By cause that she wolde nat defouled be.
O Cedasus, it is ful greet pitee
To reden how thy doghtren deyde, allas !
That slowe hem self for swich manere cas.
As greet a pitee was it, or wel moore,
The Theban mayden that for Nichanore
Hir-selven slow, right for swich manere wo.
Another Theban mayden dide right so. 16,210
For oon of Macidonye hadde hire oppressed
She with hir deeth hir mayde shede redressed.
What shal I seye of Nicerates wyf,
That for swich cas birafte hir self hir lyf ?
How trewe eek was to Alcebiades (11,751 T.)
His love, that ¹ rather for to dyen chees
Than for to suffre his body unburyed be ?
Lo, which a wyf was Alceste,” quod she.
‘What seith Omer of goode Penelopee ?
Al Grece knoweth of hire chastitee. 16,220

¹ Not in Elles. MS.

Pardee, of Lacedomya is writen thus,
 That whan at Troie was slayn Protheselaus,
 No lenger wolde she lyve after his day.
 The same of noble Porcia telle I may ;
 With-oute Brutus koude she nat lyve,
 To whom she hadde al hool hir herte geve.
 The parfit wyfhod of Arthemesie
 Honored is thurgh al the Barbarie.
 O Teuta, queene, thy wyfly chastitee 16,229
 To alle wyves may a mirour bee. (11,766 T.)
 The same thyng I seye of Bilyea,
 Of Rodogone, and eek Valeria."

Thus pleyne Dorigene a day or tweye,
 Purposynge evere that she wolde deye;
 But nathelees upon the thridde nyght (11,768 T.)
 Hoom cam Arveragus, this worthy knyght,
 And asked hire why that she weepe so soore,
 And she gan wepen ever lenger the moore.

"Allas!" quod she, "that evere I was born!
 Thus have I seyde," quod she, "thus have I
 sworn," — 16,240

And toold hym al, as ye han herd bifore,
 It nedeth nat reherce it yow namoore.

This housbonde, with glad chiere, in freendly
 wyse,

Answerde and seyde as I shal yow devyse,
 "Is ther oght elles, Dorigen, but this?"

"Nay, nay," quod she, "God helpe me so
 as wys!

This is to muche, and it were Goddes wille."

"Ye, wyf," quod he, "lat sleepen that is stille,¹

It may be wel paraventure² yet to day ;
 Ye shul youre trouthe holden, by my fay !
 For God so wisly have mercy up-on me, 16,251
 I hadde wel levere ystiked for to be,
 For verray love which that I to yow have,
 But if ye sholde youre trouthe kepe and save !
 Trouthe is the hyeste thyng that man may
 kepe," —

But with that word he brast anon to wepe,
 And seyde, "I yow forbede up payne of³
 deeth,

That nevere whil thee lasteth lyf ne breeth,
 To no wight telle thou of this aventure, —
 As I may best I wol my wo endure, — 16,260
 Ne make no contenance of hevynesse
 That folk of yow may demen harm or gesse."

And forth he cleped a squier and a mayde ;
 "Gooth forth, anon, with Dorigen," he sayde,
 "And bryngeth hire to swich a place, anon."
 They take hir leve and on hir wey they gon,
 But they ne wiste why she thider wente ;
 He nolde no wight tellen his entente. (11,8c2 T.)

Paraventure an heepe⁴ of yow, ywis,
 Wol holden hym a lewed man in this, 16,270
 That he wol putte his wyf in jupartie.
 Herkneth the tale, er ye up on hire crie,

¹ Let a still trouble sleep. ² Pronounced, as it is often written, *perauntre*. ³ Not in Elles. MS. ⁴ This expression is common.

She may have bettre fortune than yow semeth ;
And, whan that ye han herd the tale, demeth.¹

This squier, which that highte Aurelius,
On Dorigen that was so amorus, (11,804 T.)
Of aventure happed hire to meete
Amydde the toun, right in the quykke² strete,
As she was bown to goon the wey forth right
Toward the gardyn, ther as she had hight ;
And he was to the gardynward also ; 16,281
For wel he spyed whan she wolde go
Out of hir hous to any maner place ;
But thus they mette, of aventure or grace,
And he saleweth hire with glad entente,
And asked of hire whiderward she wente ;
And she answerde, half as she were mad,
“ Un-to the gardyn, as myn housbonde bad,
My trouthe for to holde, allas ! allas ! ”

Aurelius gan wondren on this cas, 16,290
And in his herte hadde greet compassioun
Of hire and of hire lamentacioun,
And of Arveragus, the worthy knyght,
That bad hire holden al that she had hight,
So looth hym was his wyf sholde breke his
trouthe ;
And in his herte he caughte of this greet routhe,
Considerynge the beste on every syde,
That fro his lust yet were hym levere abyde,
Than doon so heigh a cherlyssh wrecchednesse

¹ Tyrwhitt omits lines 16,231, 16,232, and 16,269-16,274, which are
bund in Elles. MS. only. ² Liveliest, most frequented.

Agayns franchise ¹ and alle gentillesse, 16,300
For which in fewe wordes seyde he thus :

"Madame, seyeth to youre lord, Arveragus,
That sith I se his grete gentillesse
To yow, and eek I se wel youre distresse,
That him were levere han shame, — and that
were routhe, —

Than ye to me sholde breke thus youre trouthe,
I have wel levere evere to suffre wo,
Than I departe ² the love bitwix yow two.

I yow relesse, madame, in-to youre hond,
Quyt every surement and every bond 16,310
That ye han maad to me as heer biforn
Sith thilke tyme which that ye were born.

My trouthe I plighte, I shal yow never repreve
Of no biheste, and heere I take my leve
As of the treweste and the beste wyf,
That evere yet I knew in al my lyf ;
But every wyf be war of hire biheeste.
On Dorigene remembreth, atte leeste.

Thus kan a squier doon a gentil dede 16,319
As wel as kan a knyght, with outen drede."

She thonketh hym up-on hir knees al bare,
And hoom un-to hir housbonde is she fare,
And tolde hym al, as ye han herd me sayd ;
And be ye siker he was so weel apayd ³
That it were impossible me to wryte. (11,853 T.)
What sholde I lenger of this cas endyte?

Arveragus and Dorigene his wyf

¹ Generosity ² Separate ³ Satisfied

To goon a begged¹ in my kirtle bare ;
But wolde ye vouche-sauf, up-on seuretee,
Two yeer, or thre, for to respiten me,
Thanne were I wel, for elles moot I selle
Myn heritage, ther is namoore to telle." 16,360

This philosopre sobrelly answerde,
And seyde thus, whan he thise wordes herde :
"Have I nat holde covenant un-to thee?"

"Yes, certes, wel and trewely," quod he.

"Hastow nat had thy lady as thee liketh?"

"No, no," quod he, and sorwefully he siketh.

"What was the cause ; tel me if thou kan."²

Aurelius his tale anon bigan,
And tolde hym al, as ye han herd bifoore ;
It nedeth nat to yow reherce it moore. 16,370

He seide, "Arveragus, of gentillesse,
Hadde levere dye in sorwe and in distresse,
Than that his wyf were of hir trouthe fals ;"
The sorwe of Dorigen he tolde hym als, —
How looth hire was to been a wikked wyf,
And that she levere had lost that day hir lyf,
And that hir trouthe she swoor thurgh inno-
cence, (11,905 T.)
She nevere erst hadde herd speke of appar-
ence ;³

"That made me han of hire so greet pitee,
And right as frely as he sente hire me, 16,380
As frely sente I hire to hym ageyn ;
This al and som, ther is namoore to seyn."

¹ Cf. ll. 9480, 10,396. ² Knowest. ³ The phenomena of magic

This philosophre answerde, “Leeve brother,
Everich of yow dide gentilly til oother ;
Thou art a squier, and he is a knyght,
But God forbede, for his blisful myght,
But if a clerk koude doon a gentil dede,
As wel as any of yow, it is no drede.¹

“Sire, I releesse thee thy thousand pound
As thou right now were copen² out of the
ground, 16,390

Ne nevere er now ne hadde knownen me ;
For, sire, I wol nat taken a peny of thee
For al my craft, ne noght for my travaille.
Thou hast ypayed wel for my vitaille ;
It is ynogh, and farewel, have good day ! ”
And took his hors, and forth he goth his way.

Lordynges, this questioun thanne wolde I
aske now,
Which was the mooste fre, as thynketh yow?
Now telleth me, er that ye ferther wende.
I kan namoore, my tale is at an ende. (11,928T.)

The Prologe of the Seconde Nonnes Tale.

The ministre and the norice un-to vice
Which that men clepe in Englishsh ydelnesse,⁸

¹ In faith. ² Crept. ³ In 1875 the Chaucer Society published four versions of this tale: the Latin of Jacobus a Voragine (called *Famulus*, of Genoa), *circa* 1200 A. D.; the French of Jehan de Vignay, *circa* 1300; the Early English of the Ashmole MS., *circa* 1300; and the version of Caxton's *Golden Legende* (*Legenda Aurea*) 1433. Chaucer's opening lines about Idleness were suggested by the introduction of the French version, but the remainder of the tale is a free translation of the original Latin, with judicious excisions, expansions, and other alterations.

That porter of the gate is of delices, (15,471 T.)
 To eschue, and by hire contrarie hire op-
 presse, — 16,404

That is to seyn, by leueful ¹ bisynesse, —
 Wel oghten we to don al oure entente,
 Lest that the feend thurgh ydelnesse us shente,²
 For he that with hise thousand cordes slye
 Continuelly us waiteth to biclappe,
 Whan he may man in ydelnesse espye, 16,410
 He kan so lightly cacche hym in his trappe,
 Til that a man be hent right by the lappe,³
 He nys nat war the feend hath hym in honde,
 Wel oghte us werche, and ydelnesse withstonde.
 And though men dradden nevere for to dye,
 Yet seen men wel by resoun, doutelees,
 That ydelnesse is roten slogardye,
 Of which ther nevere comth no good encrees ;
 And seen that slouthe it holdeth in a lees ⁴
 Oonly to slepe and for to ete and drynke,
 And to deuouren al that othere swynk.⁵ 16,421
 And for to putte us fro swich ydelnesse,
 That cause is of so greet confusioun,
 I have heer doon my feithful bisynesse,
 After the Legende, in translacioun,
 Right of thy glorious lif and passioun,
 Thou with thy gerland wroght with rose and
 lilie, ⁶ —

Thee, meene I, mayde and mooder Cecilie.

¹ Lawful. ² Ruin. ³ Skirt. The loose part of a garment
 Leash. ⁵ Work. ⁶ Blood of martyrdom and virgin purity.

Invocation to the Virgin Mary.

And thow that flour of virgines art alle,
 Of whom that Bernard ¹ list so wel to write ;
 To thee, at my bigynnyng, first I call, 16,431
 Thou confort of us wrecches, do me endite
 Thy maydens deeth, that wan thurgh hire mer-
 ite,

The eterneel lyf, and of the feend victorie
 As man may after reden in hire storie. (15,503 T.)
 Thow mayde and mooder, doghter of thy sone,
 Thow welle of mercy, synful soules cure,
 In whom that God for bountee ² chees to wone,³
 Thow humble, and heigh over every creature,
 Thow nobledest ⁴ so ferforth oure nature, 16,440
 That no desdeyn the Makere hadde of kynde,
 His sone in blood and flessch to clothe and
 wynde.

With-inne the cloistre blisful of thy sydis
 Took mannes shape the eterneel Love and
 Pees,
 That of the tryne compas lord and gyde is,
 Whom erthe, and see, and hevene, out of re-
 lees ⁵

Ay heryen ; ⁶ and thou virgine wemmelees ⁷
 Baar of thy body, and dweltest mayden pure,

¹ St. Bernard wrote in laud of the Virgin in his discourse on the Song of Solomon. ² Goodness. ³ Dwell. ⁴ Ennobledst. There is an interesting coincidence between ll. 16,436-16,456 and Dante's *Paradiso*, xxxiii 1-21. ⁵ Without ceasing. ⁶ Praise. ⁷ Spotless

The creatour of every creature.

Assembled is in thee magnificence,¹ 16,450

With mercy, goodnesse, and with swich pitee,

That thou that art the sonne of excellence

Nat oonly helpest hem that preyen thee,

But often tyme, of thy benygnytee,

Ful frely, er that men thyn help biseche

Thou goost biforn and art hir lyves leche.

Now help, thow meeke and blisful, faire
mayde,

Me flemed ² wrecche in this desert of galle ;

• Thynk on the womman Cananee, that sayde

That whelpes ³ eten somme of the crommes

alle 16,460

That from hir lordes table been yfalle,

And though that I, unworthy sone ⁴ of Eve,

Be synful, yet accepte my bileve.

And for that feith is deed with-outen werkis,

So, for to werken, gif me wit and space,

That I be quit fro thennes that moost derk is.

O thou that art so fair and ful of grace,

Be myn advocat in that heighe place,

Theras with-outen ende is songe Osanne,

Thow Cristes mooder, doghter deere of Anne !

And of thy light, my soule in prison lighte,

That troubled is by the contagioun 16,472

Of my body, and also by the wighte ⁵

¹ Cf. l. 6086, etc. ² Banished. ³ Cf. Wiclif's Bible, Matt. xv. 27
This expression occurs because Chaucer wrote the *Lyf of Seint
Lecile* as a separate work, and afterwards incorporated it with the
tales of the pilgrims. See *Legende of Goode Women*, prologue, l.
426. ⁵ Weight.

Of erthely lust and fals affeccioun !
 O hevene of refut,¹ O salvacioun
 Of hem that been in sorwe and in distresse,
 Now helpe, for to my werk I wol me dresse !
 Yet preye I yow that reden that I write,
 Forgeve me that I do no diligence
 This ilke storie subtilly to endite, 16,480
 For bothe have I the wordes and sentence
 Of hym² that at the seintes reverence (15,550 T.,
 The storie wroot, and folwen hire legende ;
 I pray yow that ye wole my werk amende.

Interpretation of the Name Cecilia.

First wolde I yow³ the name of Seinte Cecile
 Expowne, as men may in hir storie see.
 It is to seye in Englissh "hevenes lillie ;"
 For pure chaastnesse of virginitee,
 Or for she whitnesse hadde of honestee ;
 And grene of conscience, and of good fame,
 The soote⁴ savour, lillie was hir name ; 16,491
 Or Cecile is to seye "the wey to blynde,"
 For she ensample was by good techynge ;
 Or elles Cecile, as I writen fynde,
 Is joyned by a manere conjoynyng
 Of "hevene" and "lia,"⁵ and heere in figur-
 ynge⁶
 The "hevene" is set for thoght of hoolynesse

¹ Refuge. ² Jacobus a Voraigne. ³ Not in Elles. MS. ⁴ Sweet
 Greek, *λilav*, very. ⁵ Figuratively.

And "lia" for hire lastynge bisynesse.
 Cecile may eek be seyde in this manere ;
 Wantynge of blyndnesse, for hir grete light
 Of sapience, and for hire thewes¹ cleere ; 16,501
 Or elles, loo, this maydens name bright
 Of "hevene" and "leos" comth, for which
 by right

Men myghte hire wel the hevene of peple calle,
 Ensamble of goode and wise werkes alle.
 For "leos" "peple" in Englissh is to seye ;
 And right as men may in the hevene see
 The sonne, and moone, and sterres, every
 weye,

Right so men goostly² in this mayden free
 Syen³ of feith the magnanymyte, 16,510
 And eek the cleernesse hool of sapience,
 And sondry werkes brighte of excellence.
 And right so as thise philosophres write
 That hevene is swift, and round, and eek bren-
 nyng,⁴

Right so was faire Cecilie the white,
 Ful swift and bisy evere, in good werkynge ;
 And round and hool in good perseverynge,
 And brennyng evere in charite ful brighte :
Now have I yow declared what she highte.

¹ Moral traits. ² Spirituality. ³ Saw. ⁴ Burning.

*Here bigynneth The Seconde Nonnes Tale of the
lyf of Sainte Cecile.*

This mayden bright, Cecile, as hir lif seith,
Was comen of Romayns and of noble kynde,
And from hir cradel up fostred in the feith
Of Crist, and bar his gospel in hir mynde.
She nevere cessed, as I writen fynde, 16,524
Of hir preyere, and God to love and drede,
Bisekyng hym to kepe hir maydenhede.
And whan this mayden sholde un-to a man
Ywedded be, that was ful yong of age,
Which that ycleped was Valerian, (15,597 T.)
And day was comen of hir marriage, 16,530
She ful devout and humble in hire corage,
Under hir robe of gold that sat ful faire,
Hadde next hire flessch yclad hire in an haire ;
And whil the orgues maden melodie,
To God allone in herte thus sang she :
“ O Lord, my soule and eek my body gye ²
Unwemmed, ³ lest that I confounded be ; ”
And for his love that dyde up-on a tree,
Every seconde or thridde day she faste,
Ay biddynge ⁴ in hire orisons ful faste. 16,540
The nyght cam, and to bedde moste she gor
With hire housbonde, as ofte is the manere,
And pryvely to hym she seyde anon,
“ O sweete and wel-biloved spouse deere,

¹ Garment of hair. ² Guide. ³ Unspotted. ⁴ Praying.

Ther is a conseil, and ye wolde it heere,
Which that right fayn I wolde un-to yow seye
So that ye swere ye shul me nat biwreye."

Valerian gan faste un-to hire swere
That for no cas,¹ ne thyng that myghte be,
He sholde nevere mo biwreyen here ;² 16,550
And thanne at erst to hym thus seyde she :
" I have an aungel which that loveth me,
That with greet love, wher so I wake or sleepe,
Is redy ay my body for to kepe ;
And if that³ he may feelen, out of drede,
That ye me touche or love in vileynye,
He right anon wol sle yow with the dede,
And in youre yowthe thus ye sholden dye ;
And if that ye in clene love me gye, 16,559
He wol yow loven as me for youre clennesses,
And shewen yow his joye and his brightnesse."

Valerian, corrected⁴ as God wolde,
Answerde agayn, " If I shal trusten thee
Lat me that aungel se, and hym biholde,
And if that it a verray angel bee,
Thanne wol I doon as thou hast prayed me ;
And if thou love another man, for sothe,
Right with this swerd thanne wol I sle yow
bothe ! "

Cecile answerde anon right in this wise :
" If that yow list, the angel shul ye see, 16,570
So that ye trowe in Crist, and yow baptize.
Gooth forth to *Via Apia*," quod shee,

¹ Chance. ² Her. ³ Not in Elles. MS. ⁴ Directed.

"That fro this toun ne stant but miles three,
And to the povre folkes that ther dwelle
Sey hem right thus as that I shal yow telle.

"Tell hem that I, Cecile, yow to hem sente
To shewen yow the goode Urban the olde,
For secree thynges, and for good entente ;
And whan that ye Seint Urban han biholde,
Telle hym the wordes whiche that I to yow
tolde, 16,58c

And whan that he hath purged yow fro synne,
Thanne shul ye se that angel, er ye twynne." ¹

Valerian is to the place ygon, (15,651 T.)
And right as hym was taught by his lernynge,
He foond this hooly olde Urban anon,
Among the seintes buryeles lotynge ; ²
And he anon, with-uten tariynge,
Dide his message ; and whan that he it tolde,
Urban for joye his handes gan up holde ;
The teeris from his eyen leet he falle. 16,590
"Almyghty Lord ! O Jhesu Crist," quod he,
"Sower of chast conseil, hierde ³ of us alle,
The fruyt of thilke seed of chastitee
Thar thou hast sowe in Cecile, taak to thee !
Lo, lyk a bisy bee, with-uten gile,
Thee serveth ay thyn owene thral Cecile ;
For thilke spouse that she took right now,
Ful lyk a fiers leoun, she sendeth heere
As meke as evere was any lamb, to yow :"
And with that word anon ther gan appere 16,600

¹ Depart. ² Lurking in the Catacombs. ³ Shepherd.

An oold man, clad in white clothes cleere,
That hadde a book with lettre of gold, in honde,
And gan bifore Valerian to stonde.

Valerian as deed fil down for drede

Whan he hym saugh, and he up hente hym tho,
And on his book right thus he gan to rede :

"O Lord, o feith, o God, with-uten mo ;

O Cristendom, and Fader of alle also,¹

Aboven alle, over alle, everywhere ;"

Thise wordes al with gold ywriten were. 16,610

Whan this was rad, thanne seyde this olde man,

"Leevestow² this thyng ; or no ? Sey ye or
nay."

"I leeve al this thyng," quod Valerian,

"For oother thyng than this, I dar wel say,

Under the hevene no wight thynke may."

Tho vanysshed this olde man, he nyste where,

And Pope Urban hym cristned³ right there.

Valerian gooth hoom and fynt Cecile

With-inne his chambre with an angel stonde.

This angel hadde of roses and of lilie⁴ 16,620

Corones two, the which he bar in honde ;

And first to Cecile, as I understonde,

He gaf that oon, and after gan he take

'That oother to Valerian, hir make.⁴

"With body clene, and with unwemmed thought,

Kepeth ay wel thise corones," quod he ;⁵

'Fro paradys to yow have I hem broght,

¹ Eph. iv. 5, 6, "one Lord," etc. ² Believest thou. ³ Cf. l. 16,422
Mate ⁴ Elles. MS. reads "three"

Ne nevere mo ne shal they roten bee,
 Ne lese hir soote savour, trusteth ¹ me ;
 Ne nevere wight shal seen hem with his eye,
 But he be chaast and hate vileynye ; 16,631
 And thow, Valerian, for thow so soone
 Assentedest to good conseil also, (15,701 T.)
 Sey what thee list, and thou shalt han thy
 boone."

"I have a brother," quod Valerian tho,
 "That in this world I love no man so ;
 I pray yow that my brother may han grace
 To knowe the trouthe, as I do in this place."
 The angel seyde, "God liketh thy requeste,
 And bothe with the palm of martirdom 16,640
 Ye shullen come un-to his blissful feste ;"
 And with that word Tiburce his brother coom,
 And whan that he the savour undernoom ²
 Which that the roses and the lilies caste,
 With-inne his herte he gan to wondre faste ;
 And seyde, "I wondre, this tyme of the yeer,
 Whennes that soote savour cometh so
 Of rose and lilies that I smelle heer ;
 For though I hadde hem in myne handes two
 The savour myghte in me no depper go ; 16,650
 The sweete smel that in myn herte I fynde
 Hath chaunged me al in another kynde."

Valerian seyde, "Two corones han we,
 Snow white and rose reed, that shynen cleere,
 Whiche that thyne eyen han no myght to see ,

¹ Trust. ² Perceived.

And as thou smellest hem thurgh my preyere,
 So shaltow seen hem, leeve brother deere,
 If it so be thou wolt with-outen slouthe
 Bileve aright and knowen verray trouthe.”
 Tiburce answerde, “Seistow this to me 16,660
 In soothnesse, or in dreem I herkne this?”
 “In dremes,” quod Valerian, “han we be
 Un-to this tyme, brother myn, ywis;
 But now at erst in trouthe our dwellyng is.”
 “How woostow this,” quod Tiburce, “in what
 wyse?”

Quod Valerian, “That shal I thee devyse.
 The aungel of God hath me the ¹ trouthe ytaught,
 Which thou shalt seen, if that thou wolt reneye ²
 The ydoles, and be clene, and elles naught.”
 (And of the myracle of thise corones tweye,
 Seint Ambrose in his preface list to seye, —
 Solempnely this noble doctour deere 16,672
 Commendeth hym, and seith in this manere :
 “The palm of martirdom for to receyve
 Seinte Cecile, fulfild of Goddes gifte,
 The world and eek hire chambre ³ gan she
 weyve ;
 Witnesse Tyburces and Valerians ⁴ shrifte,
 To which God of his bountee ⁵ wolde shifte
 Corones two of floures wel smellynge,
 And made his angel hem the corones brynge ;
 The mayde hath broght thise ¹ men to blisse
 above ; 16,681

¹ Not in Elles. MS ² Renounce. Marriage. ⁴ Elles. MS. has
 ‘Cecilies.’ ⁵ Goodness.

The world hath wist what it is worth certeyn,
 Devocioun of chastitee to love.") (15,751 T.)
 Tho shewed hym Cecile, al open and pleyn,
 That alle ydoles nys but a thyng in veyn ;
 For they been dombe and therto they been
 deve,¹

And charged hym hise ydoles for to leve.

"Who so that troweth nat this, a beest he is,"
 Quod tho Tiburce, if that I shal nat lye, 16,689
 And she gan kisse his brest that herde this,
 And was ful glad he koude trouthe espye.

"This day I take thee for myn allye,"
 Seyde this blissful, faire mayde, deere,
 And after that she seyde as ye may heere :
 "Lo, right so as the love of Crist," quod she,
 "Made me thy brotheres wyf, right in that wise
 Anon for myn allye heer take I thee, 16,697
 Syn that thou wolt thyne ydoles despise ;
 Go with thy brother now, and thee baptise,
 And make thee clene so that thou mowe biholde
 The anges face, of which thy brother tolde."

Tiburce answerde and seyde, "Brother dere,
 First tell me whider I shal, and to what man?"

"To whom?" quod he ; "com forth with right
 good cheere ;

I wol thee lede un-to the Pope Urban."

"Til Urban, brother myn Valerian?"

Quod tho Tiburce ; "woltow me thider lede ?

Me thynketh that it were a wonder dede.

Ne menestow nat Urban," quod he tho,

¹ Deaf.

* That is so ofte dampned to be deed, 16,710
 And woneth in halkes¹ alwey to and fro,
 And dar nat ones putte forth his heed,
 Men sholde hym brennen in a fyr so reed
 If he were founde, or that men myghte hym
 spy,

And we also to bere hym compaignye ;
 And whil we seken thilke divinitee,
 That is yhid in hevene pryvely,
 Algate ybrend in this world shul we be !”

To whom Cecile answerde boldely, 16,719
 “Men myghten dreden wel and skilfully²
 This lyf to lese, myne owene deere brother,
 If this were lyvyng oonly, and noon oother ;
 But ther is better lif in oother place,
 That nevere shal be lost, ne drede thee noght,
 Which Goddes sone us tolde thurgh his grace ;
 That Fadres sone hath alle thyng ywroght,
 And al that wroght is with a skilful thoght.
 The Goost, that fro the Fader gan procede,
 Hath sowled³ hem, with-oute any drede.
 By word and by myracle, Goddes sone, 16,730
 Whan he was in this world, declared heere
 That ther was oother lyf ther men may wone.”

To whom answerde Tiburce, “O suster
 deere,
 Ne seydestow right now in this manere,
 ‘Ther nys but o God, lord in soothfastnesse,’ —
 And now of three how maystow bere witnesse ?

¹ Dwelleth in corners. ² Reasonably. ³ Put a soul into.

"That shal I telle," quod she, "er I go.
 Right as a man hath sapiences three, (15,806 T.)
 Memorie, engyn,¹ and intellect also,
 So in o beyng of divinitee 16,740
 Thre persones may ther right wel bee ;"
 Tho gan she hym ful bisily to preche
 Of Cristes come,² and of hise peynes teche ;
 And many pointes of his passioun,
 How Goddes sone in this world was withholde
 To doon mankynde playn remissioun,
 That was ybounde in synne and cares colde ;
 Al this thyng she un-to Tiburce tolde,
 And after this Tiburce in good entente
 With Valerian to Pope Urban he wente, 16,750
 That thanked God, and with glad herte and
 light,
 He cristned hym, and made hym in that place
 Parfit in his lernynge, Goddes knyght ;⁴
 And after this Tiburce gat swich grace
 That every day he saugh in tyme and space
 The aungel of God, and every maner boone
 That he God axed, it was sped ful soone.

It were ful hard by ordre for to seyn
 How manye wondres Jhesus for hem wroghte ;
 But atte laste, to tellen short and pleyn,⁵ 16,760
 The sergeantz of the toun of Rome hem soghte,
 And hem biforn Almache, the Prefect, broghte,
 Which hem apposed,⁶ and knew al hire entente,

¹ Invention. ² Advent. ³ Detained. ⁴ Servant (Ger. *Knecht*).
 Chaucer had begun to shorten and alter the story. ⁵ Question.

And to the ymage of Juppiter hem sente ;
 And seyde, “Who so wol nat sacrifice,
 Swape¹ of his heed ; this my sentence heer !”
 Anon thise martirs that I yow devyse,
 Oon Maximus that was an officer
 Of the Prefectes, and his corniculer,²
 Hem hente, and whan he forth the seintes
 ladde, 16,770

Hym self he weepe for pitee that he hadde.

Whan Maximus had herd the seintes loore,
 He gat hym of the tormentours leve,
 And ladde hem to his hous, with-oute moore,
 And with hir prechyng, er that it were eve,
 They gonnen fro the tormentours to reve,³
 And fro Maxime, and fro his folk echone,
 The false feith, to trowe in God allone.

Cecile cam, whan it was woxen nyght, 16,779
 With preestes, that hem cristned all yfeere ;⁴
 And afterward, whan day was woxen light,
 Cecile hem seyde with a ful stedefast cheere,
 “Now, Cristes owene knyghtes, leeve and
 deere, (15,851 T.)

Cast alle away the werkes of derknesse,
 And armeth yow in armure of brightnesse.
 Ye han, for sothe, ydoon a greet bataille,
 Youre cours is doon, youre feith han ye con-
 served.

Gooth to the corone of lyf, that may nat faille
 The rightful Juge which that ye han served

¹ Swoop. ² Lieutenant. ³ Divest. ⁴ In a company.

Shal geve it yow as ye han it deserved ;" 16,790
 And whan this thing was seyde as I devyse,
 Men ledde hem forth to doon the sacrefise ;
 But whan they weren to the place y-brought, —
 To tellen shortly the conclusioun, —
 They nolde ¹ encense, ne sacrificise right noght,
 But on hir knees they setten hem adoun
 With humble herte and sad ² devocioun,
 And losten bothe hir hevedes ³ in the place ,
 Hir soules wenten to the kyng of grace.

This Maximus, that saugh this thyng bityde,
 With pitous teeris tolde it anon right, 16,801
 That he hir soules saugh to hevene glyde,
 With aungels ful of cleernesse and of light ;
 And with his word converted many a wight,
 For which Almachius dide hym so to-bete,
 With whippe of leed, ⁴ til he the lif gan lete.
 Cecile hym took, and buryed hym anon
 By Tiburce and Valerian softly
 With-inne hire buriyng place under the stoon ;
 And after this Almachius hastily 16,810
 Bad hise ministres fecchen openly
 Cecile, so that she myghte in his presence
 Doon sacrifice, and Juppiter encense ;
 But they, converted at hir wise loore,
 Wepten ful soore, and gaven ful credence
 Un-to hire word, and cryden moore and moore,
 " Crist, Goddes sone, with-oute difference

¹ Would not. ² Grave. ³ Head (O. E. *heafod*). ⁴ Knotted with
 and.

Is verray God, this is al oure sentence,¹
 That hath so good a servant hym to serve ;
 This with o voys we trowen, thogh we sterve !"
 Almachius that herde of this doynge 16,821
 Bad fecchen Cecile that he myghte hire see ;
 And alderfirst,² lo this was his axynge,
 "What maner womman artow?" tho quod he.
 "I am a gentil womman born," quod she.
 "I axe thee," quod he, "though it thee greeve,
 Of thy religioun, and of thy bileeve."
 "Ye han bigonne youre question folily,"
 Quod she, "that wolden two answeres conclude
 In o demande ; ye axed lewedly." 16,830
 Almache answerde un-to that similitude,
 "Of whennes comth thyn answering so rude?"
 "Of whennes?" quod she, whan that she was
 freyned ;³ (15,901 T.)
 "Of conscience, and of good feith unfeyned."
 Almachius seyde, "Ne takestow noon heede
 Of my power?" And she answerde hym this :
 "Youre myght," quod she, "ful litel is to
 dreede,

for every mortal mannes power nys
 But lyke a bladdre, ful of wynd, ywys ; 16,839
 For with a nedles poynt whan it is blowe
 May al the boost of it be leyd ful lowe."
 "Ful wrongfully bigonne thow," quod he,
 "And yet in wrong is thy perseveraunce ;
 Wostow nat how oure myghty princes free

¹ Opinion. ² First of all. ³ Asked (Ger. *fragen*)

Han thus comanded and maad ordinaunce,
 That every Cristen wight shal han penaunce,
 But if that he his Cristendom withseye,
 And goon al quit, if he wole it reneye?"
 "Yowre princes erren, as youre nobleye
 dooth,"

Quod tho Cecile, "and with a wood sentence
 Ye make us gilty and it is nat sooth; 16,851
 For ye that knowen wel oure innocence, —
 For as mucche as we doon a reverence
 To Crist, and for we bere a Cristen name, —
 Ye putte on us a cryme, and eek a blame; 2
 But we, that knowen thilke name so
 For vertuous, we may it not withseye."
 Almache answerde, "Chees oon of thise two, —
 Do sacrifice, or Cristendom reneye,
 That thou mowe now escapen by that weye."
 At which the hooly blisful faire mayde 16,861
 Gan for to laughe, and to the juge sayde,
 "O juge, confus in thy nycetee! 3
 Woltow that I reneye innocence,
 To make me a wikked wight?" quod she.
 Lo, he dissymuleth heere in audience,
 He stareth, and he woodeth in his advertence. 4
 To whom Almachius, "Unsely 5 wrecche!
 Ne woostow nat how far my myght may strecche?
 Han noght oure myghty princes to me geven,
 Ye, bothe power and auctoritee 16,871

¹ Nobility. ² Fault. ³ Confused in thy foolishness. ⁴ Rageth
 his thoughts. ⁵ Unhappy.

To maken folk to dyen or to lyven ?

Why spekestow so proudly thanne to me ?"

"I speke noght but stedfastly," quod she,

'Nat proudly, for, I speke as for my syde,

We haten deedly thilke vice of pryde ;

And if thou drede nat a sooth to heere,

Thanne wol I shewe al openly by right 16,878

That thou hast maad a ful gret lesyng¹ heere ;

Thou seyst thy princes han thee geven myght

Bothe for to sleen and for to quyken² a wight ;

Thou that ne mayst but oonly lyf bireve,

Thou hast noon oother power, ne no leve :

But thou mayst seyn thy princes han thee maked

Ministre of deeth, for if thou speke of mo,

Thou lyest, for thy power is ful naked !"

"Do wey thy booldnesse !" seyde Almachius

tho,

(15,955 T.)

"And sacrifie to oure goddes er thou go !

I recche nat what wrong that thou me profre,

For I can suffre it as a philosophre, 16,890

But thilke wronges may I nat endure,

That thou spekest of oure goddes heere," quod

he.

Cecile answerde, "O nyce³ creature !

I hou seydest no word syn thou spak to me

That I ~~ne~~ knew ther-with thy nycetee,

And that thou were in every maner wise⁴

A lewed officer and a veyn justise !

Ther lakketh no thyng to thyne outter⁵ eyen

¹ Lying * Make alive. ³ Foolish. Sort of way. ⁵ Outer

That thou nart blynd, for thyng that we seen
alle

That it is stoon, — that men may wel espyen, —
That ilke stoon a god thow wolt it calle. 16,901
I rede¹ thee, lat thyn hand up-on it falle,
And taste² it wel, and stoon thou shalt it fynde
Syn that thou seest nat with thyne eyen blynde.

It is a shame that the peple shal
So scorne thee, and laughe at thy folye ;
For comunly men woot it wel overal³
That myghty God is in hise hevenes hye,
And thise ymages, wel thou mayst espye,
To thee, ne to hemself, mowen noght profite,
For in effect they been nat worth a myte.”
Thise wordes and swiche other seyde she ;
And he weex wrooth, and bad men sholde hir
lede 16,913

Hom til hir house, and “ In hire hous,” quod he,
“ Brenne hire right in a bath⁴ of flambes rede ;”
And as he bad, right so was doon in dede,
For in a bath they gonne hire faste shetten,
And nyght and day greet fyre they under bet
ten.⁵

The longe nyght, and eek a day also,
For al the fyr, and eek the bathes heete, 16,920
She sat al coold and feeled of it⁶ no wo ;
It made hire nat a drope for to sweete ;
But in that bath hir lyf she moste lete,⁷

¹ Advise. ² Test (O. Fr. *taster*, Lat. *taxo*, to touch). ³ As a principle. ⁴ A structure of masonry. ⁵ Built. ⁶ Not in Elles. MS
Must lose.

For he, Almachius, with ful wikke entente,
To sleen hire in the bath his sonde ¹ sente.

Thre strokes in the nekke he smoot hire tho,
The tormentour, but for no maner chaunce
He myghte noght smyte al hir nekke atwo ;
And for ther was that tyme an ordinaunce
That no man sholde doon men swich penaunce
The ferthe strook to smyten, softe or soore,
This tormentour ne dorste do namoore ; 16,932
But half deed, with hir nekke ycorven there,
He lefte hir lye, and on his wey is went.

The Cristen folk which that aboute hire were,
With sheetes han the blood ful faire yhent.
Thre dayes lyved she in this torment, (16,005 T.)
And nevere cessed hem the feith to teche
That she hadde fostred ; hem she gan to preche ;
And hem she gaf hir moebles, and hir thyng,
And to the Pope Urban bitook hem tho, 16,941
And seyde, " I axed this at hevene kyng,
To han respit thre dayes and namo,
To recomende to yow, er that I go,
Thise soules, lo, and that I myghte do werche ²
Heere of myn hous perpetuelly a cherche."
Seint Urban, with his deknas, prively
This body fette,³ and buryed it by nyghte
Among hise other seintes honestly. 16,949
Hir hous the chirche of Scinte Cecilie highte ;⁴
Seint Urban halwed it, as he wel myghte,
In which, in-to this day, in noble wyse, (16,020 T.)
Men doon to Crist and to his seinte servyse.

¹ Message. ² Cause to be made. ³ Fetched. ⁴ Is called.

Pleasant words of divers of the Pilgrims.

Whan toold was al the lyf of Seinte Cecile,
 Er we hadde riden fully fyve mile,¹ (16,023 T.)
 At Boghton-under-Blee, us gan atake
 A man that clothed was in clothes blake,
 And under-nethe he wered a surplys ;
 His hackeney, which that was al pomely grys,²
 So swatte that it wonder was to see ; 16,960
 It semed as he had priked miles three.
 The hors ³ eek that his Yeman rood upon
 So swatte that unnethe myghte it gon ;
 Aboute the peytrel ⁴ stood the foom ful hye,
 He was of foom al flekked as a pye.⁵
 A male ⁶ tweyfoold up-on his croper lay,
 It semed that he caried lite array.
 Al light for somer rood this worthy man,
 And in myn herte to wondren I bigan
 What that he was, til that I understood 16,970
 How that his cloke was sowed to his hood,
 For which, whan I hadde long avysed me,
 I demed hym som Chanoun for to be.
 His hat heeng at his bak down by a laas,⁷
 For he hadde riden moore than trot or paas ;
 He hadde ay priked lik as he were wood.
 A clote-leef ⁸ he hadde under his hood
 For swoot, and for to kepe his heed from heete

¹ From Osprunge, one of the halting-places. ² Dapple gray
 Elles. MS. has "hakeney." ⁴ Breastplate. ⁵ Lines 19,964 and
 9,965 are not in Elles. MS. ⁶ Saddle-bag. ⁷ Lace. ⁸ Burdock leaf

But it was joye for to seen hym swete !
 His forheed dropped as a stillatorie ¹ 16,980
 Were ² ful of plantayne and of paritorie ; ³
 And whan that he was come he gan to crye,
 " God save," quod he, " this joly compaignye !
 Faste have I priked," quod he, " for youre sake,
 By-cause that I wolde yow atake (16,053 T.)
 To riden in som myrie compaignye."

His Yeman eek was ful of curteisye,
 And seyde, " Sires, now in the morwe ⁴ tyde,
 Out of youre hostelrie I saugh you ryde,
 And warned heer my lord, and my soverayn,
 Which that ⁵ to ryden with yow is ful fayn ;
 For his desport he loveth daliaunce." 16,992

" Freend, for thy warnyng God geve thee
 good ⁵ chaunce ! "

Thanne seyde oure Hoost, " for certain it wolde
 seme

Thy lord were wys, and so I may wel deme ;
 He is ful jocunde also, dar I leye !
 Can he oght telle a myrie tale or tweye,
 With which he glade may this compaignye ? "

" Who, sire ? my lord ? ye, ye, with-uten lye !
 He kan of murthe, and eek of jolitee 17,000
 Nat but ynough, also, sire, trusteth me ;
 And ye hym knewe as wel as do I,
 Ye wolde wondre how wel and craftily
 He koude werke, and that in sondry wise.
 He hath take en hym many a greet emprise,

still. ² That were. ³ Pellitory ⁴ Morning. ⁵ Not in Elles. MS

Which were ful hard for any that is heere
 To brynge about, but they of hym it leere.¹
 As hoomely as he rit amonges yow,
 If ye hym knewe it wolde be for youre prow;²
 Ye wolde nat forgoon his aqueyntaunce 17,010
 For muchel good; I dar leye in balaunce
 Al that I have in my possessioun.
 He is a man of heigh discrecioun;
 I warne yow wel, he is a passyng man."

"Wel," quod oure Hoost, "I pray thee tel me
 than,

Is he a clerk or noon? Telle what he is."

"Nay, he is gretter than a clerk, ywis,"
 Seyde this Yeman, "and in wordes fewe,
 Hoost, of his craft som-what I wol yow shewe.

"I seye, my lord kan swich subtiltee, —
 But al his craft ye may nat wite for me, 17,021
 And som what helpe I yet to his wirkyng, —
 That al this ground on which we been ridyng,
 Til that we come to Caunterbury toun,
 He koude al clene turne it up-so-doun,
 And pave it al of silver and of gold."

And whan this Yeman hadde this tale ytold
 Un-to oure Hoost, he seyde, "*Benedicitee!*
 This thyng is wonder merveillous to me,
 Syn that thy lord is of so heigh prudence,
 By cause of which men sholde hym reverence,
 That of his worshipec rekketh he so lite. 17,032
 His overslope³ nys nat worth a myte,

¹ Learn. ² Profit. ³ Upper garment.

As in effect to hym, so moot I go ! (16,102 T.)
It is al baudy and to-tore also.

Why is thy lord so sluttissh, I the preye,
And is of power bettre clooth to beye, —
If that his dede accorde with thy speche ?
Telle me that, and that I thee biseche.”

“Why ? ” quod this Yeman, “wherto axe ye
me ? ” 17,040

God help me so, for he shal nevere thee !¹ —
But I wol nat avowe that I seye,
And therfore keepe it secree, I yow preye, —
He is to wys, in feith, as I bileeve ;
‘That that is overdoon it wol nat preeve
Aright,’² as clerkes seyn, it is a vice ;
Wherfore in that I holde hym lewed and nyce ;³
For whan a man hath over greet a wit,
Ful oft hym happeth to mysusen it. 17,049
So dooth my lord, and that me greveth soore.
God it amende ! I kan sey yow namoore.”

“Ther-of no fors, good Yeman,” quod oure
Hoost,

“Syn of the konnyng of thy lord thow woost,
Telle how he dooth, I pray thee hertely,
Syn that he is so crafty and so sly ;
Where dwelle ye, if it to telle be ? ”

“In the suburbes of a toun,” quod he,
“Lurkyng in hernes,⁴ and in lanes blynde,
Where as thise robbours and thise theves by
kynde,

Thrive. ² “Too much is stark nought ;” *ne quid nimis*, i. e.,
avoid extremes. ³ Ignorant. ⁴ Corners.

Holden hir pryvee fereful residence 17,060
 As they that dar nat shewen hir presence,
 So faren we, if I shal seye the sothe."

"Now," quod oure Hoost, "yet¹ lat me
 talke² to the ;

Why artow so discoloured of thy face ? "

"Peter ! " quod he, " God geve it harde grace,
 I am so used in the fyr to blowe,
 That it hath chaunged my colour, I trowe.
 I am nat wont in no mirour to prie,
 But swynke soore, and lerne multiplie ;³
 We blondren evere, and pouren in the fir,
 And for al that we faille of our desir, 17,071
 For evere we lakke of oure conclusioun.
 To muchel folk we doon illusioun,
 And borwe gold, be it a pound or two,
 Or ten, or twelve, or manye sommes mo,
 And make hem wenen⁴ at the leeste weye,
 That of a pound we koude make tweye ;
 Yet is it fals ; but ay we han good hope
 It for to doon and after it we grope,
 But that science is so fer us biforn 17,080
 We mowen nat, al though we hadden sworn,
 It over-take, it slit⁵ away so faste. (16,150 T.)
 It wole us maken beggers atte laste."

Whil this Yeman was thus in his talkyng
 This Chanoun drough hym neer, and herde a
 thyng

¹ Not in Elles. MS. ² Elles. MS. has "telle." ³ To multiply
 gold by transmuting base metals. ⁴ Believe. ⁵ Slides.

Which this Yeman spak, for suspecioun
Of mennes speche evere hadde this Chanoun ;
For Catoun seith that he that gilty is
Demeth alle thyng be spoke of hym, ywis.¹
That was the cause he gan so ny hym drawe
To his Yeman, to herkennen al his sawe, 17,091
And thus he seyde un-to his Yeman tho :

" Hoold thou thy pees, and spek no wordes
mo !

For if thou do, thou shalt it deere abyte !²
Thou sclaudrest me, heere in this compaignye,
And eek discoverest that thou sholdest hyde."

" Ye ? " quod our Hoost, " telle on what so
bityde ;

Of al his thretyng rekke nat a myte ! "

" In feith," quod he, " namoore I do but lyte."

And whan this Chanoun saugh it wolde nat be,
But his Yeman wolde telle his pryvetee, 17,101
He fledde away for verray sorwe and shame.

" A ! " quod the Yeman, " heere shal arise
game,

Al that I kan anon now wol I telle,
Syn he is goon, — the foule feend hym quelle !
For nevere heer after³ wol I with hym meete,
For peny ne for pound, I yow biheete !⁴
He that me broghte first un-to that game,
Er that he dye, sorwe have he and shame ;
For it is ernest to me, by my feith ! 17,110
That feele I wel what that any man seith.

1 Truly. 2 Pay for it. 3 Not in Elles. MS. 4 Promise.

And yet for al my smert, and al my grief,
 For al my sorwe, labour, and meschief,¹
 I koude nevere leve it in no wise.
 Now wolde God, my witte myghte suffise
 To tellen al that longeth² to that art ;
 And nathelees yow wol I tellen part ; (16,185 T.)
 Syn that my lord is goon I wol nat spare ;
 Swich thyng as that I knowe I wol declare."

Heere bigynneth the Chanouns Yeman his Preamble.

With this Chanoun I dwelt have seven yeer,
 And of his science am I never the neer ;³
 Al that I hadde I have lost ther-by, 17,122
 And, God woot, so hath many mo than I.
 Ther I was wont to be right fressh and gay
 Of clothyng and of oother good array,
 Now may I were an hose up-on myn heed ;
 And wher my colour was bothe fressh and reed,
 Now is it wan and of a leden hewe, —
 Who so it useth, soore shal he rewe, —
 And of my swynk yet blered is myn eye ;⁴
 Lo, which advantage is to multiplie ! 17,131
 That slidyng science hath me maad so bare,
 That I have no good wher that evere I fare ;
 And yet I am endetted so ther-by, (16,202 T.)
 Of gold that I have borwed, trewely.
 That whil I lyve I shal it quite⁵ nevere, —

¹ Harm. ² Belongeth. ³ Nearer. ⁴ Deluded. Cf ll. 3143, 4096
 10,403 ⁵ Repay.

Lat every man be war by me for evere.
 What maner man that casteth hym ther to,
 If he continue, I holde his thrift ydo ;
 For, so helpe me God, ther-by shal he nat
 wyne, 17,140

But empte his purs, and make hise wittes
 thynne ;

And whan he thurgh his madnesse and folye
 Hath lost his owene good thurgh jupartye,¹
 Thanne he exciteth oother folk ther-to,
 To lesen hir good, as he hym self hath do ;
 For un-to shrewes ² joye it is and ese,
 To have hir felawes in peyne and disese, —
 Thus was I ones lerned of a clerk. 17,148
 Of that no charge, I wol speke of oure werk.

Whan we been there as we shul excercise
 Oure elvysshe craft, we semen wonder wise,
 Oure termes been so clergial ³ and so queynte ;
 I blowe the fir til that myn herte feynte.

What sholde I tellen eche proporcioun
 Of thynges whiche that we werche upon ;
 As on fyve or sixe ounces, may wel be
 Of silver, or som oother quantitee ;
 And bisye me to telle yow the names
 Of orpyment, brent bones, iren squames,⁴
 That in-to poudre grounden been ful smal ?
 And in an erthen pot how ⁵ put is al, 17,161
 And salt yput in and also papeer ⁶

¹ Hazard (Fr. *jeu parti*, play very evenly balanced). ² Rascals.
 Learned. ⁴ Scales. ⁵ Not in Elles. MS. ⁶ Pepper.

Biforn thise poudres that I speke of heer,
 And wel ycovered with a lampe¹ of glas;
 And muchel oother thyng which that ther was
 And of the pot and glasses enlutyng,²
 That of the eyr myghte passe out no thyng,
 And of the esy fir, and smart also,
 Which that was maad and of the care and wo
 That we hadden in oure matires sublymyng,
 And in almagamyng and calcenyng 17,171
 Of quyk-silver, yclept mercurie crude,
 For alle our sleighes we kan nat conclude.
 Oure orpyment and sublymed mercurie,
 Oure grounden litarge eek on³ the porfurie,
 And ech of thise of ounces a certeyn,⁴
 Noght helpeth us, oure labour is in veyn;
 Ne eek oure spirites ascencioun,⁵
 Ne oure matires that lyen al fix adoun,
 Mowe in oure werkyng no thyng us availle;
 For lost is al oure labour and travaille, 17,181
 And al the cost, a twenty devel way, (16,250 T.)
 Is lost also, which we up-on it lay.

Ther is also ful many another thyng
 That is un-to oure craft apertenying,
 Though I by ordre hem nat reherce kan,
 By-cause that I am a lewed man;
 Yet woi I telle hem as they come to mynde,
 Thogh I ne kan nat sette hem in hir kynde, —

¹ A thin plate (Latin, *lamina*, *lamna*, a thin plate). For the inserted *p*, cf. "solempne." ² Sealing with clay. ³ Elles. MS. has "in." ⁴ Certain number. ⁵ The four "spirits" were sulphur, sal-ammoniac, quicksilver, and arsenic, or orpiment, a yellow sulphuret of arsenic.

As boole armonyak,¹ vertgrees, boras, 17,190
 And sondry vessels maad of erthe and glas;
 Oure urnals, and our descensories,
 Violes, crosletz,² and sublymatories,
 Cucurbites,³ and alambikes eek,
 And othere swiche, dæere ynough a-leek;⁴
 Nat nedeth it for to reherce hem alle, —
 Watres rubifyng, and boles galle,
 Arsenyk, sal armonyak, and brymstoon;
 And herbes koude I telle eek many oon,
 As egremoyne,⁵ valerian, and lunarie,⁶ 17,200
 And othere swiche, if that me liste tarie;
 Oure lampes brennyng bothe nyght and day,
 To brynge aboute oure purpos if we may;
 Oure fourneys eek of calcinacioun,
 And watres of albificacioun,
 Unslekked lym, chalk, and gleyre of an ey,⁷
 Poudres diverse, asshes, donge, pisse, and cley,
 Cered pottes,⁸ sal-peter and ⁹ vitriole,
 And diverse fires maad of wode and cole;
 Sal-tartre, alkaly and sal-preparat; 17,210
 And combust matires, and coagulat;
 Cley maad with hors and mannes heer, and oille
 Of tartre, alum, glas, berme,¹⁰ wort and ar-
 goille,¹¹
 Resalgar,¹² and oure matires enbiblyng,¹³
 And eek of oure matires encorpanyng,

¹ Armenian earth. ² Crucibles. ³ Gourd-shaped vessels. ⁴ If costing a leek only. ⁵ Agrimony. ⁶ Moonwort. ⁷ White of an egg. ⁸ Pots coated with wax. ⁹ Not in Elles. MS. ¹⁰ Yeast. ¹¹ Clay. ¹² Red arsenic. ¹³ Imbibition.

And of oure silver citrinacioun,¹
Oure cementyng and fermentacioun,
Oure yngottes, testes, and many mo.

I wol yow telle as was me taught also
The four² spirites and the bodies sevene, 17,220
By ordre, as ofte I herde my lord hem nevene.

The firste spirit quyk-silver called is,
The seconde orpyment, the thridde, ywis,
Sal-armonyak, and the ferthe brymstoon.
The bodyes sevene eek, lo, hem heere anon !

Sol gold is, and Luna silver, we threpe,⁴
Mars iren, Mercurie quyk-silver we clepe,
Saturnus leed, and Juppiter is tyn,
And Venus coper, by my fader kyn. 17,229

This cursed craft who so wole excercise
He shal no good han that hym may suffice ;
For al the good he spendeth ther-about
He lese shal, ther-of have I no doute.
Whoso that listeth outen⁵ his folie, (16,302 T.)
Lat hym come forth and lerne multiplie ;⁶
And every man that oght hath in his cofre,
Lat hym appiere and wexe a philosopfre,
Ascauns⁷ that crafte is so light to leere.
Nay, nay, God woot, al be he monk or frere,
Preest or chanoun, or any oother wyght, 17,240
Though he sitte at his book both day and night
In lernyng of this elvysshe nyce loore,
Al is in veyn, and, *parde*, muchel moore !

¹ Turning yellow. ² Elles. MS. has "sevene." ³ Name. ⁴ Call
⁵ Expose. ⁶ To increase gold. ⁷ As though.

To lerne a lewed man this subtiltee, —
 Fy! spek nat ther-of, for it wol nat bee ;
 And konne he letterure, or konne he noon,
 As in effect he shal fynde it al oon ;
 For bothe two, by my savacioun,
 Concluden ¹ in multiplicacioun
 Ylike wel, whan they han al ydo, — 17,250
 This is to seyn, they faillen bothe two.

Yet forgot I to maken rehersaille
 Of watres corosif, and of lymaille,²
 And of bodies mollificacioun,
 And also of hire induracioun,
 Oilles, abiucions, and metal fusible, —
 To tellen al wolde passen any Bible
 That owher is ; wherfore, as for the beste,
 Of alle thise names now wol I me reste,
 For as I trowe I have yow toold ynowe 17,260
 To reyse a feend, al looke he never so rowe.³

A! nay, lat be the philosophres stoon,
 Elixer clept, we sechen faste echoon,
 For hadde we hym, thanne were it siker ynow,
 But, un-to God of hevene I make avow,
 For al oure craft, whan we han al ydo,
 With al oure sleighte, he wol nat come us to.
 He hath y-maad us ⁴ spenden muchel good,
 For sorwe of which almoost we wexen wood,
 But that good hope crepeth in oure herte,
 Supposynge ever, though we sore smerte,
 To be releevd by hym afterward. 17,272

¹ Succeed. ² Filings. ³ Rough. Elles MS. reads ‘ maad us.’

Swich supposyng and hope is sharpe and hard ;
 I warne yow wel it is to seken evere
 That *futur temps*¹ hath maade men dissevere
 In trust ther-of from al that evere they hadde.
 Yet of that art they kan nat wexen sadde,
 For un-to hem it is a bitter-sweete, —
 So semeth it, — for nadde they but a sheete
 Which that they myghte wrappe hem inne at

nyght, 17,280

And a brat² to walken inne by day lyght,
 They wolde hem selle, and spenden on the
 craft ; (16,350 T.)

They kan nat stynte til no thyng be laft ;
 And everemoore where that evere they goon
 Men may hem knowe by smel of brymstoon.
 For al the world they stynken as a goot ;
 Hir savour is so rammyssh and so hoot
 That though a man a mile from hem be
 The savour wole infecte hym, truste me,
 And thus by smel, and threedebare array,
 If that men liste this folk they knowe may ;
 And if a man wole aske hem pryvely, 17,292
 Why they been clothed so unthriftily,
 They right anon wol rownen³ in his ere
 And seyn, that if that they espied were,
 Men wolde hem slee by-cause of hir science.
 Lo, thus this folk bitrayen innocence !

Passe over this, I go my tale un-to.

Er that the pot be on the fire ydo,

¹ Future tense. ² Rag, coarse mantle. ³ Whisper.

Of metals with a certeyn quantitee 17,300
 My lord hem tempred,¹ and no man but he, —
 Now he is goon I dare seyn boldely, —
 For as men seyn he kan doon craftily,
 Algate I woot wel he hath swich a name,
 And yet ful oft he renneth in a blame ;²
 And wite ye how ? Ful ofte it happeth so
 The pot tobreketh,³ and farewel, al is go.
 Thise metals been of so greet violence 17,308
 Oure walles mowe nat make hem resistance,
 But if they weren wroght of lym and stoon,
 They percen so, and thurgh the wal they goon,
 And somme of hem synke in to the ground, —
 Thus han we lost by tymes many a pound, —
 And somme are scatered al the floor aboute,
 Somme lepte in-to the roof, with-outen doute.
 Though that the feend noght in oure sighte
 hym shewe,

I trowe he with us be, that ilke shrewe !
 In helle where that he lord is and sire 17,318
 Nis ther moore wo, ne moore rancour, ne ire,
 Whan that oure pot is broke, as I have sayd,
 Every man chit and halt hym yvele apayd.⁴

Somme seyde it was along on the fir makyng,
 Somme seyde nay, it was on the blowyng, —
 Fhanne was I fered, for that was myn offic.

“Straw !” quod the thridde, “ye been lewed
 and nyce,

It was nat tempred as it oghte be.”

¹ Compoundeth. ² Error. ³ Breaks to pieces. ⁴ Dissatisfied
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"Nay," quod the fourthe, "stynt and herkne
me ;

By cause our fir ne was nat maad of beech,
That is the cause, and oother noon, so theeche."¹
I kan nat telle wher-on it was along, 17,330
But wel I woot greet strif us is among.

"What!" quod my lord, "ther is namoore
to doone ; (16,400 T.)

Of thise perils I wol be war eft soone.
I am right siker that the pot was crased ;²
Be as be may, be ye no thyng amased.
As usage is lat swepe the floor as swithe,³
Plukke up your hertes and beeth glad and
blithe ! "

The mullok⁴ on an heepe sweped was,
And on the floor ycast a canevas,⁵
And al this mullok in a syve ythrowe, 17,340
And sifted and ypiked many a throwe.⁶

"*Pardee!*" quod oon, "somwhat of oure
metal

Yet is ther heere, though that we han nat al.
Al though this thyng myshapped have as now,
Another tyme it may be wel ynow.
Us moste putte oure good in aventure ;
A marchant, *pardee!* may nat ay endure,
Trusteth me wel, in his prosperitee.
Somtyme his good is drenched⁷ in the see,
And somtyme comth it sauf un-to the londe."

¹ So thrive I (*thee ich*). ² Broken (Fr. *écrasé*). ³ Quickly
Rubbish. ⁴ Canvas. ⁵ Time. ⁶ Lost, drowned.

"Pees!" quod my lord, "the nexte tyme I
shal fonde ¹ 17,351

To bryngen oure craft al in another plite;
And but I do, sires,² lat me han the wite,³
Ther was defaute in som what, wel I woot."

Another seyde the fir was over hoot,
And, be it hoot or coold, I dar seye this,
'That we concluden everemoore amys.
We faille of that which that we wolden have,
And in oure madnesse everemoore we rave;
And whan we been togidres everichoon 17,360
Every man semeth a Salomon;
But every thyng which shyneth⁴ as the gold,
Nis nat gold, as that I have herd it told;
Ne every appul that is fair to eye
Ne is nat good, what so men clappe or crye.
Right so, lo, fareth it amonges us:
He that semeth the wiseste, by Jhesus,
Is moost fool whan it cometh to the preef;
And he that semeth trewest is a theef. 17,369
That shul ye knowe er that I fro yow wende.
By that I of my tale have maad an ende.

The Canon's Yeoman's Tale.

Ther is a Chanoun of Religioun (16,440 T.)
Amonges us wolde infecte al a toun.

¹ Try. ² Not in Elles. MS. ³ Blame. ⁴ Elles. MS. reads
'which that seineth." The proverb is here translated from the
Latin of Alanus de Insulis, the "Universal Doctor" (1114-1203),
mentioned at l. 316 of the *Parlement of Foules*.

Thogh it as greet were as was Nynyvee,
 Rome, Alisaundre, Troye, and othere three.
 His sleightes and his infinit falsnesse
 Ther koude no man writen, as I gesse,
 Though that he lyve myghte a thousand yeer.
 In al this world of falshede nis his peer,
 For in hise termes so he wolde hym wynde,¹
 And speke his wordes in so sly a kynde, 17,381
 Whanne he commune shal with any wight,
 That he wol make hym doten² anon right,
 But it a feend be as hym selven is. (16,452 T.)
 Fui many a man hath he bigiled er this,
 And wole, if that he lyve may a while ;
 And yet men ride and goon ful many a mile
 Hym for to seke and have his aqueyntaunce,
 Noght knowynge of his false governaunce ;
 And if yow list to geve me audience, 17,390
 I wol it telle heere in youre presence.

But, worshipful chanouns religious,
 Ne demeth nat that I desclaundre youre hous,
 Al-though that my tale of a chanoun bee ;
 Of every ordre som shrewe is, *pardee*,
 And God forbede that al a compaignye
 Sholde rewe³ o singuleer mannes folye.
 To sclaunder yow is no thyng myn entente,
 But to correcten that is mys, I mente.
 This tale was nat oonly toold for yow, 17,400
 But eek for othere mo ; ye woot wel how
That among Cristes apostles twelve

¹ Turn. ² Grow foolish. ³ Suffer for.

Ther nas no traytour but Judas hym-selve.
Thanne why sholde al the remenant have a
blame

That giltlees were? By yow I seye the same,
Save oonly this, if ye wol herkne me,
If any Judas in youre covent be,
Remoeveth hym bitýmes, I yow rede,
If shame, or los, may causen any drede,
And beeth no thyng displesed, I yow preye,
But in this cas herketh what I shal seye. 17,411

In Londoun was a preest annueleer,¹
That ther-inne had dwelled many a yeer,
Which was so plesaunt and so servysable
Un-to the wyf where as he was at table,
That she wolde suffre hym no thyng for to paye
For bord ne clothyng, wente he never so gaye ;
And spendyng silver hadde he right ynow.
Ther-of no fors, I wol procede as now,
And telle forth my tale of the chanoun 17,420
That broghte this preest to confusioun.

This false chanoun cam up-on a day
Un-to this preestes chambre wher he lay,
Bisechyng hym to lene hym a certeyn
Of gold, and he wolde quite it hym ageyn.
“Leene me a marc,” quod he, “but dayes three,
And at my day I wol it quiten thee ;
And if so be that thow me fynde fals
Another day, do hange me by the hals.”²

¹ One employed to sing anniversary masses for the dead. ² Neck

This preest hym took a marc, and that as
 swithe, 17,430

And this chanoun hym thanked ofte sithe,
 And took his leve, and wente forthe his weye,
 And at the thridde day broghte his moneye,
 And to the preest he took his gold agayn,
 Wher-of this preest was wonder glad and fayn.

"Certes," quod he, "no thyng anoyeth me
 To lene a man a noble, or two, or thre, (16,505 T.)
 Or what thyng were in my possessioun,
 Whan he so trewe is of condicioun
 That in no wise he breke wole his day ; 17,440
 To swich a man I kan never seye nay."

"What !" quod this chanoun, "sholde I be
 untrewe ?

Nay, that were a thyng yfallen al of newe.
 Trouthe is a thyng that I wol evere kepe,
 In-to that day in which that I shal crepe
 In to my grave, or ellis, God forbede !
 Bileveth this, as siker as the Crede.
 God thanke I, and in good tyme be it sayd,
 That ther was nevere man yet ywele apayd ¹
 For gold ne silver that he to me lente ; 17,450
 Ne nevere falshede in myn herte I mente ;
 And, sire," quod he, "now of my pryvetee, —
 Syn ye so goodlich han been un-to me,
 And kithed ² to me so greet gentillesse, —
 Somwhat to quyte with youre kyndenesse
 I wol yow shewe, if that yow list to leere.

¹ Annoyed. ² Shown.

I wol yow teche pleylnly the manere
How I kan werken in philosophie ;
Taketh good heede ye shul wel seen at eye
That I wol doon a maistrie ¹ er I go." 17,460

"Ye," quod the preest, "ye, sire, and wol ye
so ?

Marie ! ² ther-of I pray yow hertely."

"At youre comandement, sire, trewely,"
Quod the chanoun, "and ellis God forbeede."

Loo, how this theef koude his service beede ! ³
Ful sooth it is that swiche profred servyse
Stynketh, as witnessen thise olde wyse ;
And that ful soone I wol it verifie
In this chanoun, roote of alle trecherie,
That evere moore delit hath and gladnesse, —
Swiche feendly thoughtes in his herte im-
presse, — 17,471

How Cristes peple he may to meschief brynge.
God kepe us from his false dissymulynge !

Noght wiste this preest with whom that he
delt,

Ne of his harm comynge he no thyng felte.
O sely ⁴ preest, O sely innocent !
With coveitise anon thou shalt be blent. ⁵
O gracelees, ful blynd is thy conceite,
No thyng ne artow war of the deceite 17,479
Which that this fox yshapen hath for thee ;
Hise wily wrenches ⁶ thou ne mayst nat flee ;

¹ Masterly work. ² Marry ! (From Mary, the Virgin.) ³ Offer Simple. ⁴ Blinded. ⁵ S.ratagems.

Wherfore, to go to the conclusioun (16,550 T.)
 That refereth to thy confusioun,
 Unhappy man, anon I wol me hye
 To tellen thyn unwit, and thy folye,
 And eek the falsnesse of that oother wrecche,
 As ferforth as my konnyng may strecche.

This chanoun was my lord, ye wolden weene,
 Sire Hoost, in feith, and by the hevenes queene,
 It was another chanoun and nat hee, 17,490
 That kan an hundred foold moore subtiltee.
 He hath bitrayed folkes many tyme;
 Of his falshede it dulleth me to ryme.
 Evere whan that I speke of his falshede,
 For shame of hym my chekes wexen rede, —
 Algates they bigynnen for to glowe, —
 For reednesse have I noon, right wel I knowe,
 In my visage, for fumes diverse
 Of metals, whiche ye han herd me reherce,
 Consumed and wasted han my reednesse.
 Now taak heede of this chanons cursednesse.

“Sire,” quod he to the preest, “lat youre
 man gon 17,502

For quyk-silver that we hadde it anon,
 And lat hym bryngen ounces two or three,
 And whan he comth, as faste shal ye see
 A wonder thyng which ye saugh nevere er this.’

“Sire,” quod the preest, “it shal be doon
 ywis.”

He bad his servant fecchen hym this thyng,
 And he al redy was at his biddying, 17,509

And wente hym forth, and cam anon agayn
 With this quyk-silver, soothly for to sayn ;
 And toke thise ounces thre to the chanoun,
 And he hem leyde faire and wel adoun,
 And bad the servant coles for to brynge,
 That he anon myghte go to his werkyng.

The coles right anon weren yfet,
 And this chanoun took out a crosselet
 Of his bosom, and shewed it to the preest.
 "This instrument," quod he, "which that thou
 seest,

Taake in thyn hand, and put thy self ther-inne
 Of this quyk-silver an ounce, and heer bi-
 gynne, 17,521

In the name of Crist, to wexe a filosofre.
 Ther been ful fewe to whiche I wolde profre
 To shewen hem thus muche of my science,
 For ye shul seen heer by experience,
 That this quyk-silver wol I mortifye,
 Right in youre sighte anon, I wol nat lye,
 And make it as good silver and as fyn,
 As ther is any in youre purse or myn,
 Or elleswhere, and make it malliable ; 17,530
 And elles holdeth me fals and unable
 Amonges folk for evere to appeere. (16,600 T.)
 I have a poudrè heer that coste me deere
 Shal make al good, for it is cause of al
 My konnyng, which that I yow shewen shal.
 Voyde youre man and lat hym be ther-oute,
 And shette the dore whils we been aboute

Oure pryvetee, that no man us espie
Whils that we werke in this philosophie."

Al as he bad fulfilled was in dede ; 17,540
This ilke servant anonright out gede,
And his maister shette the dore anon,
And to hire labour spedily they gon.

This preest at this cursed chanouns bidding
Up-on the fir anon sette this thyng,
And blew the fir and bisyed hym ful faste ;
And this chanoun in-to the crosselet ¹ cast
A poudre, noot I wher-of that it was
Ymaad, outhur of chalk or elles ² of glas,
Or som-what elles, was nat worth a flye,
To blynde with the preest, and bad hym hye
The coles for to couchen ³ al above 17,552
The crosselet ; " For in tokenyng I thee love,"
Quod this chanoun, " thyne owene handes two
Shul werchen al thyng which shal heer be do."

" *Graunt mercy !* " quod the preest, and was
ful glad,

And couched coles as that chanoun bad ;
And while he bisy was, this feendly wrecche,
This false chanoun, — the foule feend hym
fecche ! —

Out of his bosom took a bechen cole, 17,560
In which ful subtilly was maad an hole,
And ther-inne put was of silver lemaille ⁴
An ounce, and stopped was with-uten faille
The hole with wex, to kepe the lemaille in ;

¹ Crucible. ² Not in Elles. MS. ³ Arrange. ⁴ Filings.

And understondeth, that this false gyn
 Was nat maad ther, but it was maad bifore ;
 And othere thynges I shal tellen moore
 Herafterward, whiche that he with hym broghte
 Er he cam there hym to bigile he thoghte ;
 And so he dide, er that they wente atwynne ;
 Til he had terned ¹ hym, he koude nat blynne.²
 It dulleth me, whan that I of hym speke ;
 On his falshede fayn wolde I me wreke, 17,573
 If I wiste how, but he is heere and there,
 He is so variaunt, that he abit ³ nowhere.

But taketh heede now, sires, for Goddes
 love !

He took this cole of which I spak above,⁴
 And in his hand he baar it pryvely,
 And whyles the preest couched bisily
 The coles, as I tolde yow er this, 17,580
 This chanoun seyde, "Freend, ye doon amys,
 This is nat couched as it oghte be ; (16,650 T.)
 But soone I shal amenden it," quod he.
 "Now lat me medle ther-with but a while,
 For of yow have I pitee, by Seint Gile !⁵
 Ye been right hoot, I se wel how ye swete ;
 Have heer a clooth, and wipe away the wete
 And whyles that the preest wiped his face,
 This chanoun took his cole with harde grace,
 And leyde it up above on the myddeward
 Of the crosselet, and blew wel afterward,
 Til that the coles gonne faste brenne. 17,592

¹ Turned, *i. e.*, duped. ² Cease. ³ Abideth. ⁴ This sounds as if the story were written, not told. ⁵ The story of St. Giles (*Ægidius*) is in the *Legenda Aurea*. See Chambers's *Book of Days*, ii. 296

"Now geve us drynke," quod the chanoun
 thenne,
 "As swithe al shal be, wel I undertake.
 Sitte we doun, and lat us myrie make ;"
 And whan that this chanones bechen cole
 Was brent, al the lemaille out of the hole
 In-to the crosselet fil anon adoun,
 And so it moste nedes, by resoun,
 Syn it so evene aboven couched was ; 17,600
 But ther-of wiste the preest no thyng, alas !
 He demed alle the coles yliche good,
 For of that sleighte he no thyng understood ;
 And whan this alkamystre saugh his tyme, —
 "Ris up," quod he, "sire preest, and stondeth¹
 by me,
 And for I woot wel ingot have I noon,
 Gooth walketh forth, and brynge us a chalk
 stoon,
 For I wol make oon of the same shape
 That is an ingot, if I may han hape ;²
 And bryngeth eek with yow a bolle³ or a panne
 Ful of water, and ye shul se wel thanne 17,611
 How that oure bisynesse shal thryve and
 preeve ;
 And yet, for ye shul han no mysbileeve,
 Ne wrong conceite of me in youre absence,
 I ne wol nat been out of youre presence,
 But go with yow, and come with yow ageyn."
 The chambre dore, shortly for to seyn,

¹ Elles. MS. has "sit." ² Hap ³ Bowl.

They opened and shette, and went hir weye,
 And forth with hem they carieden the keye,
 And coome agayn with-outen any delay. 17,620
 What sholde I tarien al the longe day?
 He took the chalk and shoope it in the wise
 Of an ingot as I shal yow devyse.

I seye, he took out of his owene sleeve
 A teyne¹ of silver — yvele moot he cheeve!² —
 Which that ne was nat but an ounce of weighte;
 And taak heede now of his cursed sleighte.

He shoope his ingot in lengthe and eek in
 breede
 Of this teyne, with-outen any drede,
 So slyly that the preest it nat espide; 17,630
 And in his sleve agayn he gan it hide,
 And fro the fir he took up his mateere
 And in thyngot putte it with myrie cheere,
 And in the water vessel he it caste (16,702 T.)
 Whan that hym luste, and bad the preest as
 faste,

"What that heer is, put in thin hand and grope,
 Thow fynde shalt ther silver, as I hope."
 What, devel of helle! sholde it ellis be?
 Shavyng of silver silver is, *parde!*³
 He putte his hand in, and took up a teyne
 Of silver fyn, and glad in every veyne 17,641
 Was this preest, whan he saugh that⁴ it was so.
 "Goddess blessing, and his moodres also,

¹ Plate. ² Achieve, end. ³ Lines 17,638 and 17,639 are **not** in Elles. MS. ⁴ Not in Elles. MS.

And alle halwes, have ye, sire chanoun ! ”
 Seyde this preest, “ and I hir malisoun !
 But, and ye vouche-sauf to techen me
 This noble craft and this subtilitee,
 I wol be youre in al that evere I may.”

Quod the chanoun, “ Yet wol I make assay
 The seconde tyme, that ye may taken heede
 And been expert of this, and in youre neede
 Another daye assaye in myn absence 17,652
 This discipline, and this crafty science.
 Lat take another ounce,” quod he tho,
 “ Of quyk-silver, with-uten wordes mo,
 And do ther with as ye han doon er this
 With that oother, which that now silver is.”

This preest hym bisieth in al that he kan
 To doon as this chanoun, this cursed man,
 Comanded hym, and faste he blew the fir
 For to come to the effect of his desir ; 17,661
 And this chanoun right in the meene while
 Al redy was the preest eft to bigile,
 And for a contenaunce in his hand he bar
 An holwe stikke, taak kepe and be war,
 In the ende of which an ounce and namoore
 Of silver lemaille put was, as bifore
 Was in his cole, and stopped with wex weel,
 Fo to kepe in his lemaille every deel. 17,669
 And whil this preest was in his bisynesse,
 This chanoun with his stikke gan hym dresse
 To hym anon, and his poudre caste in
 As he did er, — the devel out of his skyn

Hym torne, I pray to God, for his falshede !
 For he was evere fals in thoght and dede, —
 And with this stikke above the crosselet,
 That was ordeyned with that false jet,¹
 He stired the coles, til relente gan
 The wex agayn the fir, as every man,
 But it a fool be, woot wel it moot nede ; 17,680
 And al that in the stikke was out gede,²
 And in the crosselet hastily it fel. (16,750 T.)

Now, good sires, what wol ye bet than wel ?³
 Whan that this preest thus was bigiled ageyn,
 Supposynge noght but treuthe, sooth to seyn,
 He was so glad that I kan nat expresse
 In no manere his myrthe and his gladnesse,
 And to the chanoun he profred eftsoone
 Body and good. “Ye,” quod the chanoun
 soone,

“Though povre I be, crafty thou shalt me fynde ;
 I warne thee yet is ther moore bihynde. 17,691
 Is ther any copper her-inne ?” seyde he.

“Ye,” quod the preest, “sire, I trowe wel
 ther be.”

“Elles go bye us som, and that as swithe.
 Now, good sire, go forth thy wey and hy the.”
 He wente his wey, and with the copper cam,
 And this chanoun it in hise handes nam,⁴
 And of that copper weyed out but an ounce.

Al to symple is my tonge to pronounce,

¹ Contrivance. ² Gone. ³ What will ye more? ⁴ Took (*Ver. taken*).

As ministre of my wit, the doublesnesse 17,700
Of this chanoun, roote of alle cursednesse.

He semed freendly to hem that knewe hym
nought,

But he was feendly bothe in herte and thought.

It weerieth me to telle of his falsnesse,

And nathelees yet wol I it expresse

To thentente that men may be war therby,

And for noon oother cause, trewely.

He putte the ounce of copur in the crosselet,

And on the fir as swithe he hath it set,

And caste in poudre, and made the preest to

blowe, 17,710

And in his werkyng for to stoupe lowe,

As he dide er, and al nas but a jape.

Right as hym liste the preest he made his ape ;¹

And afterward in the ingot he it caste,

And in the panne putte it at the laste,

Of the water. In he putte his owene hand ;

And in his sleve, as ye biforne-hand

Herde me telle, he hadde a silver teyne ;

He slyly tooke it out, — this cursed heyne,² —

Unwityng this preest of his false craft, 17,720

And in the pannes botme he hath it laft,

And in the water rombled³ to and fro,

And wonder pryvely took up also

The copur teyne, nought knowynge this preest,

And hidde it, and hym hente by the breest,

And to hym spak and thus seyde in his game

¹ Cf. l. 706, etc. ² Wretch. ³ Fumbled.

"WHAT SHAL THIS RECEITE COSTE?" 113

"Stoupeth adoun, by God, ye be to blame,
Helpeth me now, as I dide yow whil-eer, 17,728
Putte in youre hand, and looketh what is theer."

This preest took up this silver teyne anon
And thanne seyde the chanoun, "Lat us gon
With thise thre teynes whiche that we han
wrought (16,800 T.)

To som goldsmyth, and wite if they been ought ;
For, by my feith, I nolde for myn hood,
But if that they were silver fyn and good,
And that as swithe preeved it shal bee."

Un-to the goldsmyth with thise teynes three
They wente, and putte thise teynes in assay
To fir and hamer, myghte no man seye nay,
But that they weren as hem oghte be. 17,740

This sotted preest, who was gladder than he?
Was nevere brid gladder agayn the day,
Ne nyghtyngale in the sesoun of May.
Nas nevere man that luste bet to synge,
Ne ladye lustier in carolyng,
Or, for to speke of love and wommanhede,
Ne knyght in armes to doon an hardy dede
To stonden in grace of his lady deere,
Than hadde this preest this soory craft to leere
And to the chanoun thus he spak and seyde :
' For love of God, that for us alle deyde,
And as I may deserve it un-to yow, 17,752
What shal this receite coste, telleth now ? "

' By oure lady," quod this chanoun, "it is
deere,

I warne yow wel, for save I and a frere
In Engelond ther kan no man it make."

"No fors," quod he, "now, sire, for Goddes
sake,

What shal I paye? Telleth me, I preye."

"Ywis," quod he, "it is ful deere, I seye.

Sire, at o word, if that thee list it have, 17,760
Ye shul paye fourty pound, so God me save;
And nere¹ the freendshipe that ye dide er this
To me ye sholde paye moore y-wis."

This preest the somme of fourty pound anon
Of nobles fette, and took hem everichon
To this chanoun, for this ilke receit.
Al his werkyng nas but fraude and deceit.

"Sire preest," he seyde, "I kepe han no loos²
Of my craft, for I wolde it kept were cloos,
And, as ye love me, kepeth it secree; 17,770
For, and men knewen al my soutiltee,
By God, they wolden han so greet envye
To me, by cause of my philosophye,
I sholde be deed, ther were noon oother weye."

"God it forbeede," quod the preest; "what
sey ye?"

Yet hadde I levere spenden al the good
Which that I have, — or elles wexe I wood!³ —
Than that ye sholden falle in swiche mescheef."

"For youre good wyl, sire, have ye right good
preef,"

Quod the chanoun, "and farwel, *grant mercy!*"

¹ No were, i. e., were it not for. ² Care for no fame. ³ Go crazy

He wente his wey and never the preest hym sy
After that day; and whan that this preest
shoolde 17,782

Maken assay at swich tyme as he wolde
Of this receit, farwel, it wolde nat be !
Lo, thus byjaped and bigiled was he.
Thus maketh he his introduccioun, (16,854 T.)
To brynge folk to hir destruccioun.

Considereth sires, how that in ech estaat,
Bitwixe men and gold ther is debaat¹
So ferforth, that unnethe² is ther noon. 17,792
This multiplying blent³ so many oon,
That, in good feith, I trowe that it bee
The cause grettest of swich scarsetee.
Philosophres speken so mystily
In this craft, that men kan nat come therby,
For any wit that men han now a dayes.
They mowe wel chiteren as that doon jayes,
And in hir termes sette hir lust and peyne,
But to hir purpos shul they nevere atteyne.
A man may lightly⁴ lerne, if he have aught,
To multiplie, and brynge his good to naught.

Lo, swich a lucre is in this lusty game 17,802
A mannes myrthe it wol turne un-to grame,⁵
And empten also grete and hevye purses,
And maken folk for to purchacen curses
Of hem that han hir good ther-to ylent.
O fy, for shame ! they that han been brent,

¹ Strife. ² Scarcely. ³ Deceives. ⁴ Easily. ⁵ Grief

Allas ! kan they nat flee the fires heete ?
 Ye that it use I rede ye it leete, 17,809
 Lest ye lese al, for "bet than nevere is late ;"
 Nevere to thryve were to long a date.
 Though ye prolle ¹ ay, ye shul it nevere fynde.
 Ye been as boold as is Bayard the blynde,²
 That blondreth forth and peril casteth noon.
 He is as boold to renne agayn a stoon,
 As for to goon bisides in the weye.
 So faren ye that multiplie, I seye ;
 If that youre eyen kan nat seen aright, 17,818
 Looke that youre mynde lakke noght his sight,
 For though ye looken never so brode, and stare,
 Ye shul no-thing wynne on that chaffare,
 But wasten al that ye may rape and renne.³
 Withdraweth the fir, lest it to faste brenne, —
 Medleth namoore with that art, I mene,
 For if ye doon youre thrift is goon ful clene ;
 And right as swithe, I wol yow tellen heere,
 What philosophres seyn in this mateere.

Lo, thus seith Arnold of the Newe-Toun,⁴
 As his *Rosarie* maketh mencion ;
 He seith right thus, with-outen any lye, 17,830
 Ther may no man mercurie mortifie,⁵
 But it be with his brother knowlechyng.

Lo, how that he which that first seyde this
 thyng
 Of philosophres fader was Hermes.

¹ Search. ² As bold as Bayard, the blind steed, was a popular proverb. ³ Gain by rapacity and plundering. ⁴ Arnald de Ville neuve, in his *Rosarium Philosophorum*. ⁵ Change chemically.

He seith how that the dragon doutelees
 Ne dyeth nat, but if that he be slayn (16,904 T.)
 With his "brother;" and that is for to sayn
 By the dragon Mercurie,¹ and noon oother,
 He understood, and Brymstoon by his brother,
 That out of *Sol* and *Luna* were ydrawe; 17,840
 "And therefore," seyde he, "taak heede to my
 sawe;

Lat no man bisye hym this arte for to seche,
 But if that he thentencioun and speche
 Of philosophres understonde kan;
 And if he do he is a lewed man,
 For this science and this konnyng," quod he,
 "Is of the secree of secrees,"² *pardee*."

Also ther was a disciple of Plato
 That on a tyme seyde his maister to,
 As his book *Senior*³ wol bere witnesse, 17,850
 And this was his demande, in soothfastnesse,
 "Telle me the name of the privee stoon."

And Plato answerde un-to hym anoon,
 "Take the stoon that *Titanos* men name" —
 "Which is that?" quod he. "*Magnasia* is
 the same,"

Seyde Plato. "Ye, sire, and is it thus?
 This is *ignotum per ignocius*.⁴
 "What is *Magnasia*, good sire, I yow preye?"

¹ This jargon is that of the so-called Rosicrucians. ² In the *Secreta Secretorum*, supposed to contain the sum of Aristotle's instructions to Alexander. Lydgate translated it, and Occleve translated Columna's *De Regimine Principum*, which was based upon it, into English verse. Gower drew largely from it in the eighth book of his *Confessio Amantis*. ³ *Senioris Zadith fil. Hamuelis Tabula Chymica*, printed in the *Theatrum Chemicum*. ⁴ That which is unknown by that which is still more unknown.

"It is a water that is maad, I seye,
Of elementes foure,"¹ quod Plato. 17,860

"Telle me the roote,² good sire," quod he
tho,

"Of that water, if it be youre wille."

"Nay, nay," quod Plato, "certein that I
nylle ;

The philosophres sworn were everychoon
That they sholden discovere it un-to noon,
Ne in no book it write in no manere,
For un-to Crist it is so lief and deere,
That he wol nat that it discovered bee,
But where it liketh to his deitee 17,869
Man for tenspire, and eek for to deffende
Whom that hym liketh ; lo, this is the ende."

Thanne conclude I thus, sith that God of
hevene

Ne wil nat that the philosophres nevene³
How that a man shal come un-to this stoon,
I rede as for the beste lete it goon ;
For who so maketh God his adversarie,
As for to werken any thyng in contrarie
Of his wil, certes never shal he thryve, 17,878
Thogh that he multiplie terme of his⁴ lyve ;
And there a poynt ; for ended is my tale.
God sende every trewe man boote of his bale.⁵

Amen.

(16,949 T.)

¹ The four elements were earth, air, fire, water. ² Radix. Cf. 6736. ³ Name. ⁴ Not in Elles. MS. ⁵ Help out of his trouble.

Words of Divers of the Pilgrims.

Woot ye nat where ther stant a litel toun,
 Which that ycleped is Bobbe-up-and-doun,¹
 Under the Blee² in Caunterbury weye ?
 Ther gan oure Hooste for to jape and pleye,
 And seyde, " Sires, what ! Dun is in the Myre !³
 Is ther no man for preyere ne for hyre,
 That wole awake oure felawe al bihynde ?
 A theef myght hym ful lightly robbe and bynde.
 See how he nappeth, see how, for cokkes bones !
 As he wol falle fro his hors atones. . . . 17,891
 Is that a Cook of Londoun ? with meschaunce !
 Do hym come forth, he knoweth his penaunce,
 For he shal telle a tale, by my fey !
 Al-though it be nat worth a botel hey.⁴
 Awake, thou Cook," quod he, " God geve thee
 sorwe !
 What eyleth thee to slepe by the morwe ?⁵
 Hastow had fleen⁶ al nyght, or artow dronke ?
 Or hastow with som quene⁷ al nyght yswonke
 So that thow mayst nat holden up thyn heed ? "
 This Cook, that was ful pale and no thyng
 reed, 17,901

Generally supposed to be Harbledown, just out of Canterbury.
¹ Cf. l. 16,956. ² A proverbial expression, arising from a mediæval rural sport. Dun, like Bayard, is a horse, represented in the game by a huge log which is with difficulty dragged by the players. Here the expression means, "We are in a scrape!" Cf. l. 18,171, and see also Mercutio's words in *Romeo and Juliet*, act i., sc. 4, l. 41. ³ Bun-
 die (Fr. *botte*, bundle). Cf. *Midsummer Night's Dream*, act iv.,
 sc. 1, l. 37: "I have a great desire to a bottle of . . . y." ⁴ It was now
 the morning of the last day of the journey. ⁵ Fleas. ⁶ Quean.

Seyde to oure Hoost, "So God my soule blesse,
 As ther is falle on me swich hevynesse,
 Noot I nat why, that me were levere slepe
 Than the beste galon wyn in Chepe."

"Wel," quod the Maunciple, "if it may doo
 ese

To thee, sire Cook, and to no wight displese
 Which that heere rideth in this compaignye,
 And that oure Hoost wole of his curteisye,
 I wol as ¹ now excuse thee of thy tale, 17,910
 For, in good feith, thy visage is ful pale,
 Thyne eyen daswen ² eek as that me thynketh,
 And wel I woot thy breeth ful soure stynketh,
 That sheweth wel thou art nat wel disposed;
 Of me certeyn thou shalt nat been yglosed.
 See how he ganeth, ³ lo, this dronken wight!
 As though he wolde swolwe us anonright.
 Hoold cloos thy mouth, man, by thy fader kyn!
 The devel of helle sette his foot ther-in!
 Thy cursed breeth infecte wole us alle. 17,920
 Fy, stynkyng swyn! fy, foule moote thou falle!
 A! taketh heede, sires, of this lusty man!
 Now, sweete sire, wol ye justen atte fan? ⁴
 Therto me thynketh ye been wel yshape!
 I trowe that ye dronken han wyn ape, ⁵
 And that is whan men pleyen with a straw."

And with this speche the Cook wax wrooth
 and wraw, ⁶

¹ Not in Elles. MS. ² Are dazed. ³ Yawneth. ⁴ Quintaine (vane), requiring steadiness. ⁵ A familiar mode of indicating the second degree of inebriety; when the subject is antic. ⁶ Peevish.

And on the Manciple he gan nodde faste
For lakke of speche, and doun the hors hym
caste ; 17,929.

Where as he lay till that men up hym took.
This was a fair chyvachee¹ of a Cook. (16,999 T.)
Allas ! he nadde holde hym by his ladel !
And er that he agayn were in his sadel
Ther was greet showvyng bothe to and fro
To lifte hym up, and muchel care and wo,
So unweeldy was this sory, palled² goost ;
And to the Manciple thanne spak oure Hoost :

"By cause drynke hath dominacioun
Upon this man, by my savacioun,
I trowe, lewedly he wolde telle his tale, 17,940
For were it wyn, or oold or moysty ale,
That he hath dronke, he speketh in his nose,
And fneseth³ faste, and eek he hath the pose.⁴
He hath also to do moore than ynough
To kepe hym and his capul⁵ out of slough ;
And if he falle from his capul eftsoone,
Thanne shal we alle have ynogh to doone,
In lifyng up his hevy, dronken cors ;
Telle on thy tale, of hym make I no fors.

"But yet, Manciple, in feith thou art to nyce
Thus openly repreve hym of his vice ; 17,951
Another day he wole, peraventure,
Reclayme thee and brynge thee to lure,⁶ —
I meene, he speke wole o^c smale thynges

¹ Equestrian feat. ² Enfeebled. ³ Puffeth (Old Eng. *fneosan*, to puff). Cf. Job xli. 18. ⁴ Catarrh. ⁵ Nag. ⁶ As in falconry.

As for to pynchen at thy rekenynges
That were nat honeste, if it cam to preef."

"No," quod the Manciple, "that were a
greet mescheef,

So myghte he lightly brynge me in the snare,
Yet hadde I levere payen for the mare
Which he¹ rit on, than he sholde with me
stryve. 17,960

I wol nat wratthe hym, al so moot I thryve !
That that I spake I seyde it in my bourde ;²
And wite ye what ? I have heer in a gourde
A draghte of wyn, ye, of a ripe grape,
And right anon ye shul seen a good jape.
This Cook shal drynke ther-of if that I may.
Up peyne of deeth, he wol nat seye me nay."

And certeynly, to tellen as it was,
Of this vessel the Cook drank faste, allas !
What neded hym ? he drank ynough biforn ;
And whan he hadde pouped in this horn, 17,971
To the Manciple he took the gourde agayn,
And of that drynke the Cook was wonder fayn,
And thanked hym in swich wise as he koude.

Thanne gan oure Hoost to laughen wonder
loude,
And seyde, "I se wel it is necessarie
Where that we goon, good³ drynke we with us
carie.

For that wol turne rancour and disese
Tacord and love, and many a wrong apese.

¹ Elles. MS. has "that he." ² Banter. ³ Elles. MS. reads "tha..

“O thou ¹ Bacus ! yblessed be thy name !
 That so kanst turnen earnest in-to game, 17,981
 Worshipe and thank be to thy deitee ! (17,050 T.)
 Of that mateere ye gete namoore of me ;
 Telle on thy tale, Manciple, I thee preye.”

“Wel, sire,” quod he, “now herkneth what I
 seye.” ²

Heere bigynneth The Manciples Tale of the Crowe.

Whan Phebus dwelled heere in this world
 adoun, (17,054 T.)
 As olde bookes maken mencion,
 He was the mooste lusty bachiler
 In al this world, and eek the best archer.
 He slow Phitoun, the serpent, as he lay 17,990
 Slepynge agayn the sonne upon a day,
 And many another noble worthy dede
 He with his bowe wroghte, as men may rede.

Pleyen he koude on every mynstralcie,
 And syngen that it was a melodie
 To heeren of his cleere voys the soun.
 Certes the kyng of Thebes, Amphioun,
 That with his syngyng walled that citee,
 Koude nevere syngen half so wel as hee.
 Therto he was the semelieste man 18,000
 That is or was sith that the world bigan.
 What nedeth it hise fetures to discryve,

¹ Not in Elles. MS. ² The origin of the following oft-told tale is found in Ovid's brief recital in the *Metamorphoses*, book ii., fable 7.

For in this world was noon so fair on lyve.
 He was ther-with fulfild of gentillesse,
 Of honour, and of parfit worthynesse.

This Phebus that was flour of bachilrie,
 As wel in fredom as in chivalrie,
 For his desport, in signe eek of victorie
 Of Phitoun, so as telleth us the storie,
 Was wont to beren in his hand a bowe. 18,01c

Now hadde this Phebus in his hous a crowe
 Which in a cage he fostred many a day,
 And taughte it speke, as men teche a jay.
 Whit was this crowe as a snow whit swan,
 And countrefete the speche of every man
 He koude, whan he sholde telle a tale ;
 Ther-with in al this world no nyghtyngale
 Ne koude by an hondred thousand deel
 Syngen so wonder myrily and weel. 18,019

Now hadde this Phebus in his hous a wyf,
 Which that he lovede moore than his lyf,
 And nyght and day dide evere his diligence
 Hir for to plese, and doon hire reverence ;
 Save oonly, the sothe that I shal sayn,
 Jalous he was and wolde have kept hire fayn,
 For hym were looth byjaped for to be ;
 And so is every wight in swich degree ;
 But all in ydel, for it availleth noght.
 A good wyf that is clene¹ of werk and thoght
 Sholde nat been kept in noon awayt² certayn ;
 And trewely the labour is in vayn 18,03.

¹ Pure. ² Espionage.

To kepe a shrewe, for it wol nat bee. (17,100 T.)

This holde I for a verray nycetee ¹

To spille ² labour for to kepe wyves,

Thus writen olde clerkes in hir lyves.

But now to purpos as I first bigan ;

This worthy Phebus dooth all that he kan

To plesen hire, wenyng that swich plesaunce,

And for his manhede and his governaunce,

That no man sholde han put hym from hire

grace ;

18,040

But God it woot, ther may no man embrace

As to destreyne ³ a thyng which that nature

Hath natureelly set in a creature.

Taak any bryd, and put it in a cage,⁴

And do al thyn entente, and thy corage,

To fostre it tendrely with mete and drynke

Of alle deyntees that thou kanst bithynke,

And keepe it al so clenly as thou may, 18,048

Al though his cage of gold be never so gay,

Yet hath this brid by twenty thousand foold

Levere in a forest that is rude and coold

Goon ete wormes and swich wrecchednesse ;

For evere this brid wol doon his bisynesse

To escape out of his cage, if he may ;

His libertee this brid desireth ay.

Lat take a cat, and fostre hym wel with milk

And tendre flessch, and make his couche of silk,

And lat hym seen a mous go by the wal,

¹ Folly. ² Waste. ³ Constrain. ⁴ Cf. l. 15,387; Boethius, *book vi., met. 2*; and the *Romaunt of the Rose*

Anon he weyveth milk, and flessch, and al,
 And every deyntee that is in that hous, 18,060
 Swich appetit he hath to ete a mous.

Lo, heere hath lust his dominacioun,
 And appetit fleemeth ¹ discrecioun.

A she-wolf hath also a vileyns kynde; ²
 The lewedeste wolf that she may fynde,
 Or leest of reputacioun, wol ³ she take
 In tyme whan hir lust to han a make.

Alle thise ensamples speke I by thise men
 That been untrewe, and no thyng by wommen;
 For men han evere a likerous appetit, 18,070
 On lower thyng to parfourne hir delit
 Than on hire wyves, be they never so faire,
 Ne never so trewe, ne so debonaire;
 Flessch is so newefangel, ⁴ with meschaunce!
 That we ne konne in no thyng han plesaunce,
 That sowneth in-to vertu, any while.

This Phebus, which that thoghte upon no
 gile,
 Deceyved was for al his jolitee,
 For under hym another hadde shee,
 A man of litel reputacioun, 18,080
 Nat worth to Phebus in comparisoun;
 The moore harm is, it happeth ofte so,
 Of which ther cometh muchel harm and wo.

And so bifel, whan Phebus was absent,
 His wyf anon hath for hir lemman ⁵ sent.

¹ Banisheth. ² Nature. ³ The six MSS. have "that" before
 wol." ⁴ Desirous of new things. ⁵ Paramour.

“THE TIRAUNT IS OF GRETTTER MYGHT.” 127

“Hir lemman?” certes this is a knavyssh
speche! (17,154 T.)

Forgeveth it me, and that I yow biseche.

The wise Plato seith, as ye may rede,¹

“The word moot nede accorde with the dede;”

If men shal telle proprely a thyng 18,090

The word moot cosyn be to the werkynge.

I am a boystous² man; right thus seye I,

Ther nys no difference trewely

Bitwixe a wyf that is of heigh degree,

If of hire body dishoneste she bee,

And a povre wenche, oother than this, —

If it so be they werke bothe amys, —

But that the gentile in hire estaat above,

She shal be cleped his “lady,” as in love;

And for that oother is a povre womman,

She shal be cleped his “wenche,” or his “lem-
man,” 18,101

And God it woot, myn owene deere brother,

Men leyn that oon as lowe as lith that oother.

Right so bitwixe a titleless tiraunt

And an outlawe, or a thief erraunt,

The same I seye, ther is no difference, —

To Alisaundre was toold this sentence, —

That for the tiraunt is of gretter myght

By force of meynee,³ for to sleen down right,

And brennen⁴ hous and hoom, and make al
playn, 18,110

¹ Cf. l. 742. The thought is in Chaucer's *Boethius*. ² Rough
Attendants. ³ Burn.

Lo, therefore is he cleped a "capitayn ;"
 And for the outlawe hath but smal meynee,
 And may nat doon so greet an harm as he,
 Ne brynge a contree to so greet mescheef,
 Men clepen hym an "outlawe," or a "theef ;"
 But for I am a man noght textueel,
 I wol noght telle of textes never a deel ;
 I wol go to my tale as I bigan.
 Whan Phebus wyf had sent for hir lemman,
 Anon they wroghten al hire lust volage.¹

The white crowe that² heeng ay in the cage
 Biheeld hire werk and seyde never a word ;
 And whan that hoom was come Phebus, the
 lord, 18, 123
 This crowe sang "Cokkow ! Cokkow ! Cok-
 kow !"

"What ! bryd," quod Phebus, "what song
 syngestow ?

Ne were thou wont so myrily to synge
 That to myn herte it was a rejoysynge
 To heere thy voys ? Allas ! what song is this ?"

"By God !" quod he, "I synge nat amys.
 Phebus," quod he, "for al thy worthynesse,
 For al thy beautee and thy gentillesse, 18, 131
 For al thy song and al³ thy mynstralcy,
 For al thy waityng, blered is thyn eye
 With oon of litel reputacioun, (17, 202 T.)
 Noght worth to thee as³ in comparisoun
 The montance of a gnat, so moote I thryve !
 For on thy bed thy wyf I saugh hym swyve."

¹ Giddy. ² Elles. MS. has "they." ³ Not in Elles. MS

What wol ye moore? The crowe anon hym
tolde

By sadde tokenes, and by wordes bolde,
How that his wyf had doon hire lecherye,
Hym to greet shame and to greet vileynye,
And tolde hym ofte he saugh it with hise
eyen. 18, 142

This Phebus gan awayward for to wryen,¹
And thoughte his sorweful herte brast atwo;
His bowe he bente, and sette ther-inne a fle.²
And in his ire his wyf thanne hath he slayn, —
This is theeffect, ther is namoore to sayn;
For sorwe of which he brak his mynstralcie,
Bothe harpe, and lute, and gyterne, and sautrie,
And eek he brak hise arwes and hise bowe,
And after that thus spak he to the crowe:

"Traitour," quod he, "with tonge of scor-
pioun 18, 152

Thou hast me broght to my confusioun.
Allas! that I was wroght! why nere I deed?
O deere wyf! O gemme of lustiheed!
That were to me so sad,³ and eek so trewe,
Now listow deed, with face pale of hewe,
Ful gilteless, — that dorste I swere, ywys!
O rakel⁴ hand! to doon so foule amys.
O trouble wit! O ire, recchelees! 18, 160
That unavysed smyteth gilteles!
O wantrust!⁵ ful of faïs suspeciou,
Where was thy wit and thy discrecioun?

¹ Turn. ² Arrow. ³ Firm Rash. ⁵ Distrust.

O every man, be war of rakelnesse,
 Ne trowe no thyng with-outen strong witnesse.
 Smyt nat to soone, er that ye witen why ;
 And beeth avysed wel and sobrely,
 Er ye doon any execucioun
 Up-on youre ire for suspecioune !
 Allas ! a thousand folk hath rakel ire 18,170
 Fully fordoon, and broght hem in the mire !
 Allas ! for sorwe I wol my-selven slee."

And to the crowe, "O false thief !" seyde
 he,

"I wol thee quite anon thy false tale.
 Thou songe whilom lyk a nyghtyngale ;
 Now shaltow, false thief, thy song forgon,
 And eek thy white fetheres everichon ;
 Ne nevere in al thy lif ne shaltou speke ;
 Thus shal men on a traytour been awreke.¹
 Thou, and thyn of-spryng, evere shul be blake,
 Ne nevere sweete voyse shul ye make, 18,181
 But evere crie agayn tempest and rayn,
 In tokenyng that thurgh thee my wyf is
 slayn." (17,251 T.)

And to the crowe he stirte, and that anon,
 And pulled hise white fetheres everychon,
 And made hym blak, and refte hym all his song,
 And eek his speche, and out at dore hym slong.
 Un-to the devel, which I hym bitake !²
 And for this caas been alle crows blake.

Lordynges,³ by this ensample I yow preye,

¹ Avenged. ² Commend him to. ³ Mr. Furnivall suggests ~~that~~
~~the~~ remainder of this tale was written late in the poet's life.

Beth war, and taketh kepe what I seye ; 18,191

Ne telleth nevere no man in youre lyf

How that another man hath dight¹ his wyf ;

He wol yow haten mortally, certeyn.

Daun Salomon, as wise clerkes seyn,

Techeth a man to kepen his tonge weel ;

But as I seyde, I am noght textueel,

But nathelees, thus taughte me my dame :

"My sone, — thenk on the crowe, on Goddes
name, —

My sone, keepe wel thy tonge and keepe thy
freend ; 18,200

A wikked tonge is worse than a feend ;

My sone, from a feend men may hem blesse ;

My sone, God of his endelees goodnesse

Walled a tonge with teeth and lippes eke,

For man sholde hym avyse what he speeke ;

My sone, ful ofte for to mucche speche

Hath many a man been spilt,² as clerkes teche,

But for litel speche avysely

Is no man shent,² to speke generally.

My sone, thy tonge sholdestow restreyne 18,210

At alle tymes, but whan thou doost thy payne

To speke of God, in honour and preyere.

The firste vertu,³ sone, if thou wolt leere,

Is to restreyne and kepe wel thy tonge ;

Thus lerne children whan that they been yonge

My sone, of muchel spekyng yvele avysed,

¹ Dealt with. ² Ruined. This injunction is from the *Disticha de Moribus ad Filium*, of Dionysius Cato. Cf. *Troilus and Criseyde*, iii. 294. The *Disticha* was early given to children.

Ther lasse spekyng hadde ynough suffised,
Comth muchel harm, thus was me toold and
taught ;

In muchel speche synne wanteth naught.

Wostow wher-of a rakel tonge serveth ? 18,220

Right as a swerd forkutteth and forkerveth

An arm atwo, my deere sone, right so

A tonge kutteth freendshipe al atwo.

A jangler is to God abhomynable.

Reed Salomon, so wys and honorable,

Reed David in hise Psalmes, reed Senekke.

My sone, spek nat but with thyn heed thou
bekke ;¹ (17,295 T.)

Dissimule as thou were deaf, if that thou heere

A jangler speke of perilous mateere. 18,229

The Flemyng seith, and lerne it if thee leste,

That 'litel janglyng causeth muchel rest.'

My sone, if thou no wikked word hast seyde,

Thee thar nat drede for to be biwreyd ;

But he that hath mysseyd, I dar wel sayn,

He may by no wey clepe² his word agayn.

Thyng that is seyde is seyde, and forth it gooth,

Though hym repente, or be hym leef or looth.

He is his thral to whom that he hath sayd

A tale of which he is now yvele apayd.³ 18,239

My sone, be war, and be noon auctour newe

Of tidynges, wheither they been false or trewe ;

Wher so thou come, amonges hye or lowe,

Kepe wel thy tonge, and think up-on the
crowe." (17,311 T.)

¹ Bow. ² Recall. ³ Dissatisfied.

The Parson called upon for his Tale.

By that the Maunciple hadde his tale al
ended (17,312 T.)

The sonne fro the south lyne was descended
So lowe that he ne nas nat to my sighte
Degrees nyne-and-twenty as in highte ;
Foure¹ of the klokke it was tho, as I gesse,
For ellevene foot, or litel moore or lesse,
My shadwe was at thilke tyme, as there
Of swiche feet as my lengthe parted were
In sixe feet equal of proporcioun. 18,252
Ther-with the moones exaltacioun,
I meene *Libra*, alwey gan ascende
As we were entryng at a thropes ende ;
For which our Hoost, as he was wont to gye,
As in this caas, oure joly compaignye,
Seyde in this wise, "Lordynges everichoon,
Now lakketh us no tales mo than oon ;²
Fulfilled is my sentence and my decree ; 18,260
I trowe that we han herd of ech degree.
Almoost fulfild is al myn ordinaunce ;
I pray to God so geve hym right good chaunce
That telleth this tale to us lustily.

"Sire Preest," quod he, "artow a vicary
Or arte a Person ? sey sooth, by thy fey !
Be what thou be, ne breke thou nat oure pley,

¹ The MSS. generally read "ten." ² From this it is plain that the poet intended to have the Parson's Tale complete the series, though he did not live to write all the intermediate tales.

For every man save thou hath toold his tale.
 Unbokele, and shewe us what is in thy male ;
 For trewely, me thynketh by thy cheere, 18,270
 Thou sholdest knytte up wel a greet mateere.
 Telle us a fable anon, for cokkes bones ! "

This Persoune answerde al atones,
 "Thou getest fable noon ytoold for me,
 For Paul, that writeth un-to Thymothee,
 Repreveth hem that weyveth soothfastnesse,
 And tellen fables, and swich wrecchednesse.
 Why sholde I sowen draf out of my fest
 Whan I may sowen whete if that me lest ?
 For which I seye, if that yow list to heere
 Moralitee and vertuous mateere, 18,281
 And thanne that ye wol geve me audience,
 I wol ful ² fayn, at Cristes reverence, (17,351 T.)
 Do yow plesaunce leefful, as I kan ;
 But, trusteth wel, I am a southren inan,
 I kan nat geeste '*rum, ram, ruf,*' by lettre ;⁸
 Ne, God woot, rym holde I but litel better ;
 And therfore, if yow list, — I wol nat glose,⁴ —
 I wol yow telle a myrie ⁵ tale in prose,
 To knytte up al this feeste, and make an ende .
 And Jhesu, for his grace, wit me sende 18,291
 To shewe yow the wey, in this viage,
 Of thilke parfit, glorious pilgrymage,
 That highte Jerusalem celestiaī ,

¹ Bag. ² Not in Elles. MS. ³ The use of alliteration, here ridiculed with good humor, obtained in the North after more polished verse had come into vogue in the South. ⁴ Praise (my performance). ⁵ Pleasant.

And if ye vouche-sauf, anon I shal
Bigynne up-on my tale, for whiche I preye
Telle youre avys. I kan no better seye.

"But nathelees this meditacioun
I putte it ay under correccioun
Of clerkes, for I am nat textueel.¹ 18,300
I take but sentence,² trusteth weel ;
Therefore I make a protestacioun
That I wol stonde to correccioun."

Up-on this word we han assented soone,
For as us semed, it was for to doone,
To enden in som vertuous sentence,
And for to geve hym space and audience ;
And bede oure Hoost he sholde to hym seye
That alle we to telle his tale hym preye.

Oure Hooste hadde the wordes for us alle :
"Sire Preest," quod he, "now faire yow bifalle !
Sey what yow list, and we wol gladly heere ;"
And with that word, he seyde in this manere :
"Telleth," quod he, "your meditacioun ; 18,314
But hasteth yow, the sonne wole adoun.
Beth fructuous, and that in litel space, (17,384 T.)
And to do wel, God sende yow his grace."

¹ Chaucer always guards himself at this point ² Sense.

Heere bigynneth The Persouns Tale.

JER. VI. *State super vias, et videte, et interrogate de semitis*¹ *antiquis, quæ sit via bona, et ambulate in ea; et inuenietis refrigerium animabus vestris.*²

Oure sweete Lord God of hevene, that no man wole perisse, but wole that we comen alle to the knoweleche of hym and the blissful lif that is perdurable,³ amonesteth us by the prophete Jeremie, and seith in this wyse: [18,320] “Stondeth upon the weyes, and seeth, and axeth of olde pathes, that is to seyn of olde sentences, which is the goode wey, and walketh in that wey, and ye shal fynde refresshyng for youre soules.”

Manye been the weyes espirituels that leden folk to oure Lord Jhesu Crist, and to the regne⁴ of glorie; of whiche weyes ther is a ful noble wey, and a covenable,⁵ which may nat fayle to no man, ne to womman, that thurgh synne hath mysgoon fro the righte wey of Jerusalem celestial, and this wey is cleped penitence; of which man sholde gladly herkner [18,325] and enquire with al his herte to wyte what is penitence, and whennes it is cleped penitence,⁶ and in how manye maneres been

¹ Elles. MS. has “viis.” ² This text is the version of Jeremiah vi. 16, in the Latin Vulgate. ³ Everlasting. ⁴ Kingdom. ⁵ Suitable. ⁶ This point is omitted in the discussion.

the acciouns or werkynges of penitence,¹ and how manye spesces ther been of penitence,² and whiche thynges apertenen and bihoven to penitence,³ and whiche thynges destourben penitence.⁴

Seint Ambrose seith that penitence is the pleyntyng⁵ of man for gilt that he hath doon and namoore to do any thyng for which hym oghte to pleyne; and som doctour seith, "Penitence is the waymentyng⁶ of man that sorweth for his synne, and pyneth⁷ hym self for he hath mysdoon." Penitence with certeyne circumstances is verray repentance of a man that halt hym self in sorwe and oother peyne for hise [18,330] giltes; and for he shall be verray penitent, he shal first biwaylen the synnes that he hath doon and stidefastly purposen in his herte to have shrift of mouthe and to doon satisfaccioun, and nevere to doon thyng for which hym oghte moore biwayle or to compleyne, and continue in goode werkes, or elles his repentance may nat availle; for, as seith Seint Ysidre,⁸ "He is a japer and a gabber and no verray repentant that eftsoone dooth thyng for which hym oghte repente." Wepynge, and nat for to stynt to synne, may nat avaylle; but nathe lees men shal hope that every tyme that man falleth, be it never so ofte, that he may arise

¹ See 18,338. ² See 18,345. ³ The body of the tale is devoted to the discussion of this point, but especially 18,560 to 19,271. ⁴ See 18,300. ⁵ Deploring. ⁶ Bewailing. ⁷ Paineth. ⁸ Isidor.

thurgh penitence if he have grace; but cer-
 [18,335] teinly it is greet doute, for, as seith
 Seint Gregorie, unnethe¹ ariseth he out of
 synne that is charged with the charge of yvel
 usage; and therefore repentant folk that stynte
 for to synne, and forlete synne er that synne
 forlete hem,² hooly chirche holdeth hem siker
 of liue savacioun. And he that synneth and
 veriaily repenteth hym in his laste, hooly
 chirche yet hopeth his savacioun, by the grete
 mercy of oure Lord Jhesu Crist for his repent-
 aunce; but taak ye³ the siker wey.

And now sith I have declared yow what
 thyng is penitence, now shul ye understonde
 that ther been three acciouns of penitence.
 The firste accioun of penitence is that a man
 be baptized after that he hath synned. Seint
 [18,340] Augustyn seith, "But he be penytent
 for his olde synful lyf, he may nat bigynne the
 newe clene⁴ lif;" for certes, if he be baptized
 withouten penitence of his olde gilt he receyv-
 eth the mark of baptesme but nat the grace, ne
 the remission of his synnes, til he have repent-
 ance verray.⁵ Another defaute is this, that men
 doon deedly synne after that they han receyved
 baptesme. The thridde defaute is that men fall-
 en in venial synnes after hir baptesme fro day
 to day. Ther-of seith Seint Augustyn that peni-

¹ Scarcely. ² Cf. l. 9360. ³ Not in Elles. MS. ⁴ Pure. ⁵ True
 Fr. *verai*).

tence of goode and humble folk is the penitence of every day.

[18,345] The speces¹ of penitence been thre. That oon of hem is solempne,² another is comune, and the thridde is privee. Thilke penance that is solempne is in two maneres; as to be put out of hooly chirche in lente for slaughtre of children, and swich maner thyng. Another thyng is whan a man hath synned openly, of which synne the fame is openly spoken in the contree, and thanne hooly chirche by juggement destreyneth³ hym for to do open penaunce. Commune penaunce is that preestes enjoynen men in certeyn caas, as for to goon peraventure naked in pilgrimages, or bare-foot. Pryvee penaunce is thilke that men doon alday for privee synnes, of whiche they shryve hem prively, and receyve privee penaunce.

[18,350] Now shaltow understande what is bihovely and necessarie to verray perfit penitence. And this stant on thre thynges: Contricioun of herte, Confessioun of mouth, and Satisfaccioun; for which seith Seint John Crisostom, "Penitence destreyneth a man to accepte benygnely every peyne that hym is enjoyned with contricioun of herte, and shrift of mouth, with satisfaccioun, and in werkynge of alle manere humylitee;" and this is fruytful

¹ Species. ² Cf. l. 17, 164. ³ Constraineth.

penitence agayn¹ thre thynges in whiche we wratthe oure Lord Jhesu Crist. This is to seyn, by delit in thynkyng, by reccheleesnesse in spekyng, and by wikked synful werkynge ; [18,355] and agayns thise wikkede gyltes is penitence that may be likned un-to a tree.

The roote of this tree is contricioun, that hideth hym in the herte of hym that is verray repentaunt, right as the roote of a tree hydeth hym in the erthe. Of the roote of contricioun spryngeth a stalke, that bereth braunches and leues of confessioun, and fruyt of satisfaccioun. For which Crist seith in his gospel, "Dooth digne² fruyt of penitence ;" for by this fruyt may men knowe this tree, and nat by the roote that is hyd in the herte of man, ne by the braunches, ne by the leues of confessioun ; and therfore oure Lord Jhesu Crist seith thus, "By the fruyt [18,360] of hem ye shul knowen hem." Of this roote eek spryngeth a seed a grace, the which seed is mooder of sikerness,³ and this seed is egre and hoot. The grace of this seed spryngeth of God thurgh remembrance of the day of doome and on the peynes of helle. Of this matere seith Salomon, that in the drede of God man forleteth his synne. The heete of this seed is the love of God, and the desiryng of the joye perdurable.⁴ This heete draweth the herte of a man to God, and dooth hym

¹ Against. ² Worthy. ³ Sureness, salvation. ⁴ Everlasting.

[18.365] haten his synne; for soothly ther is no thyng that savoureth so wel to a child as the milk of his norice, ne no thyng moore abhomynable than thilke milk whan it is medled¹ with oother mete.² Right so the synful man that loveth his synne, hym semeth that it is to him moost sweete of any thyng; but fro that tyme that he loveth sadly³ oure Lord Jhesu Crist, and desireth the lif perdurable, ther nys to him no thyng moore abhomynable; for soothly the lawe of God is the love of God. For which David the prophete seith, "I have loved thy lawe, and hated wikkednesse and hate; he that loveth God kepeth his lawe and his word." This tree saugh the prophete Daniel in the avysioun of the kyng Nabugodonor, whan he conseiled hym to do penitence. [18.370] Penaunce is the tree of lyf to hem that it receyven, and he that holdeth hym in verray penitence is blessed, after the sentence⁴ of Salomon.

In this penitence or contricioun man shal understonde foure thynges; that is to seyn, what is contricioun, and whiche been the causes that moeven a man to contricioun, and how he sholde be contrit, and what contricioun availleth to the soule. Thanne is it thus that contricioun is the verray⁵ sorwe that a man receyveth in his herte for his synnes, with sad

¹ Mixed. ² Food. ³ Firmly. ⁴ Opinion. ⁵ True

purpos to shryve hym and to do penaunce, and neveremoore to do synne ; and this sorwe shal been in this manere, as seith Seint Bernard ; it shal been hevy and grevous, and ful sharpe and poynant in herte. First, for man hath agilt¹ his Lord and his Creatour, and moore sharpe and poynaunt for he hath agilt hys [18,375] Fader celestial, and yet moore sharpe and poynaunt for he hath wrathed and agilt hym that boghte hym, which with his precious blood hath delivered us fro the bondes of synne, and fro the crueltee of the devel, and fro the peynes of helle.

The causes that oghte moeve a man to contricioun been sexe. First, a man shal remembre hym of hise synnes ; but looke he that thilke remembraunce ne be to hym no delit by no wey, but greet shame and sorwe for his gilt ; for Job seith, synful men doon werkes worthy of confessioun. And therfore seith Ezechie, " I wol remembre me alle the yeres of my lyf in bitternesse of myn herte." And God seith in the Apocalipse, " Remembreth yow fro whennes that ye been falle ;" for biforr that tyme that ye synned ye were the children of God, and lymes of the regne² of God ; but [18,380] for youre synne ye been woxen thral and foul, and membres of the feend, hate of aungels, sclaundre of hooly chirche, and foode

¹ Offended. ² Branches of the kingdom.

of the false serpent, perpetueel matere¹ of the fir of helle; and yet moore foul and abhominable, for ye trespassen so ofte tyme as dooth the hound that retourneth to eten his spewyng; and yet be ye fouler for youre longe continuynge in synne and youre synful usage, for which ye be roten in youre synne as a beest in his dong. Swiche manere of thoghtes maken a man to have shame of his synne and no delit, as God seith by the prophete Ezechiel, “Ye shal remembre yow of youre weyes and they shuln displese yow.” Soothly synnes been the weyes that leden folk to helle.

[18,385] The seconde cause that oghte make a man to have desdeyn of synne is this, that, as seith Seint Peter, “Who-so that dooth synne is thral of synne;” and synne put a man in greet thraldom, and therefore seith the prophete Ezechiel, “I wente sorweful in desdayn² of my self;” and certes, wel oghte a man have desdayn² of synne and withdrawe hym from that thraldom and vileynye. And lo, what seith Seneca in this matere? He seith thus: “Though I wiste that God — neither God ne man — ne sholde nevere knowe it, yet wolde I have desdayn for to do synne.” And the same Seneca also seith, “I am born to gretter thynges than to be thral to my body, or than for to maken of my body a thral;” ne a fouler thral

¹ Material. ² Contempt.

may no man ne womman maken of his body than for to geven his body to synne. Al were [18,390] it the fouleste cherl, or the fouleste womman that lyveth, and leest of value, yet is he thanne moore foule and moore in servitude. Evere fro the hyer degree that man falleth, the moore is he thral, and moore to God and to the world abhomynable. O goode God! wel oghte man have desdayn of synne, sith that thurgh synne ther he was free now is he maked bonde; and therfore seyth Seint Augustyn, "If thou hast desdayn of thy servant, if he agilte, or synne, have thou thanne desdayn that thou thy-self sholdest do synne; take reward¹ of thy value, that thou ne be to foul [18,395] to thy-self." Allas! wel oghten they thanne have desdayn to been servauntz and thralles to synne, and soore been ashamed of hem self, that God of his endelees goodnesse hath set hem in heigh estaat, or geven hem wit, strengthe of body, heele,² beautee, prosperitee, and boghte hem fro the deeth with his herte blood, that they so unkyndely³ agayns his gentillesse quiten hym so vileynsly to slaughtre of hir owene soules. O goode God! ye women that been of so greet beautee, remembreth yow of the proverbe of Salomon, he seith, "Likneth a fair womman that is a fool of hire body lyk to a ryng of gold that were in the groyn⁴ of a

¹ Regard. ² Health. ³ Unnaturally. ⁴ Snout (Fr *groin*).

[18,400] soughe, for right as a soughe wroteth¹ in everich ordure, so wroteth hire beautee in the stynkyng ordure of synne."

The thridde cause that oghte moeve a man to contricioun is drede of the day of doome and of the horrible peynes of helle ; for as Seint Jerome seith, " At every tyme that me remembreth of the day of doome, I quake, for whan I ete, or drynke, or what so that I do, evere semeth me that the trompe sowneth in myn ere, ' Riseth up, ye that been dede, and cometh to [18,405] the juggement.' " O goode God ! muchel oghte a man to drede swich a juggement, ther as we shullen been alle, as Seint Poul seith, biforn the seete of oure Lord Jhesu Crist, wher as he shal make a general congregacioun, wher as no man may been absent, for certes there availleth noon essoyne,² ne excusacioun. And nat oonly that oure defautes shullen be jugged,³ but eek that alle oure werkes shullen openly be knowe. And as seith Seint Bernard, " Ther ne shal no pledynge availle ne sleighte, we shullen [18,410] geven rekenynge of everich ydel word, ther shul we han a juge that may nat been deceyved ne corrupt." And why ? for certes alle oure thoghtes been discovered as to hym ; ne for preyere, ne for meede,⁴ he shal nat been corrupt. And therefore seith Salomon, " The wratthe of God [wol nat be corrupte ;" and

¹ Rooteth. ² Essoin, excuse. ³ Judged. ⁴ Reward

therefore saith Salomon, "The wrecche¹] ne wol nat spare no wight for preyere ne for gifte ;" and therfore, at the day of doom ther nys noon hope to escape.

Wherefore, as seith Seint Anselm, "Ful greet angwyssh shul the synful folk have at that tyme. Ther shal the stierne and wrothe juge sitte above, and under hym the horrible put² of helle open to destroyen hym that noot biknow-en hise synnes, whiche synnes openly been shewed biforn God and biforn every creature ; and in the left syde mo develes than herte may bithynke, for to harye³ and drawe the synful [18,415] soules to the peyne of helle ; and with-inne the hertes of folk shal be the bitynge conscience, and with-oute forth shal be the world al brennynge." Whider shal thanne the wretched synful man flee to hiden hym? Certes, he may nat hyden hym, — he moste come forth and shewen hym ; for certes, as seith Seint Jerome, "The erthe shal casten hym out of hym, and the see also, and the eyr also, that shal be ful of thonder clappes and lightnynges."

Now soothly, who so wel remembreth hym of thise thynges, I gesse that his synne shal nat turne hym in delit, but to greet sorwe, for drede of the peyne of helle. And therfore seith Job to God, "Suffre, Lord, that I may a-while biwaille, and wepe, er I go with oute

¹ Wreche, vengeance. Not in Elles. MS. ² Pit. ³ Harass.

returnyng to the derke lond covered with the [18,420] derknesse of deeth, to the lond of myse and of derknesse, where as is the shadwe of deeth ; where as ther is noon ordre or ordinance, but grisly drede that evere shal laste." Loo, heere may ye seen that Job preyde respit a while to biwepe and waille his trespas, for soothly a day of respit is better than al the tresor of the world ; and for as muche as a man may acquiten hym self biforn God by penitence in this world, and nat by tresor, therfore sholde he preye to God to geve hym respit a while to biwepe and biwaillen his trespas ; for certes, al the sorwe that a man myghte make fro the bigynnyng of the world nys but a litel thyng at regard of the sorwe of helle.

The cause why that Job clepeth helle the [18,425] lond of derknesse. Under-stondeth that he clepeth it londe of erthe, for it is stable and nevere shal faille ; dirk, for he that is in helle hath defaute of light material, for certes, the derke light that shal come out of the fyr that evere shal brenne shal turne hym al to payne that is in helle, for it sheweth hym to the horrible develes that hym tormenten, covered with the derknesse of deeth ; that is to seyn, that he that is in helle shal have defaute of the sighte of God ; for certes, the sighte of **God** is the lyf perdurable.

The derknesse of deeth been the synnes that

the wrecched man hath doon, whiche that destourben hym to see the face of God, right as dooth a derk clowde bitwixe us and the sonne. Lond of misese, by-cause that ther been thre maneres of defautes¹ agayn thre thynges that folk of this world han in this present lyf; that is to seyn, honours, delices,² and riches. [18,430] Agayns honour have they in helle shame and confusioun, for wel ye woot that men clepen honour the reverence that man doth to man; but in helle is noon honour ne reverence, for certes, namoore reverence shal be doon there to a kyng than to a knave. For which God seith by the prophete Jeremye, "Thilke folk that me despisen shul been in despit." Honour is eek cleped greet lordshipe. [Ther, shal no wight serven oother but of harm and torment. Honour is eek cleped greet digynytee³] and heighnesse, but in helle shul they been al fortroden of develes. And God seith, "The horrible develes shulle goon and comen up-on the hevedes⁴ of the dampned folk;" and this is for-as-muche as the hyer that they were in this present lyf, the moore shulle they been abated and defouled in helle.

[18,435] Agayns the riches of this world shul they han mysese of poverte; and this poverte shal been in foure thynges. In defaute of tresor, of which that David seith, "The riche

¹ Lack ² Luxuries. ³ Not in Elles. MS. ⁴ Heads.

folk that embraceden and oneden¹ al hire herte to tresor of this world, shul slepe in the slepyng of deeth, and no thyng ne shal they fynden in hir handes of al hir tresor." And moore-over the myseyse of helle shal been in defaute of mete and drinke, for God seith thus by Moyses, "They shul been wasted with hunger, and the briddes of helle shul devouren hem with the bitter deeth, and the galle of the dragon shal been hire drynke, and the venym of the dragon hire morsels."² And for ther-over hire myseyse shal been in defaute of clothyng, for they shulle be naked in body, as of clothyng, save the fyr in which they brenne, and othere 18,440] filthes; and naked shul they been of soule, as of alle manere vertues which that is the clothyng of the soule. Where been thanne the gaye robes, and the smale shetes, and the softe shertes? Loo, what seith God of hem by the prophete Ysaye? That under hem shul been strawed³ motthes, and hire covertures shulle been of wormes of helle. And forther-over hir myseyse shal been in defaute of freendes, for he nys nat povre that hath goode freendes; but there is no frend; for neither God, ne no creature, shal been freend to hem, and everich of hem shal haten oother with deedly hate. The sones and the doghtren shullen rebellen agayns fader and mooder, and

¹ United. ² Deut. xxxii. 24. ³ Strewn.

kynrede agayns kynrede, and chiden and despisen everich of hem oother bothe day and nyght, as God seith by the prophete Michias. [18,445] And the lovyng children that whilom loveden so fleshly everich oother wolden everich of hem eten oother if they myghte ; for how sholden they love togidre in the payne of helle, whan they hated ech of hem oother in the prosperitee of this lyf ? For truste wel, hir fleshly love was deedly hate, as seith the prophete David, "Who-so that loveth wikkednesse he hateth his soule ;" and who-so hateth his owene soule, certes, he may love noon oother wight in no manere ; and therfore in helle is no solas, ne no freendshipe, but evere the moore fleshly kynredes that been in helle, the moore cursynges, the more chidynges, and the moore deedly hate ther is among hem.

[18,450] And forther-over they shul have defaute of alle manere delices ;¹ for certes delices been after the appetites of the five wittes, as sighte, herynge, smellynge, savorynge, and touchyng : but in helle hir sighte shal be ful of derknesse and of smoke, and therfore ful of teeres, and hir herynge ful of waymentyng and of gryntyng of teeth, as seith Jhesu Crist. Hir nose-thirles² shullen be ful of stynkyng styng ; and, as seith Ysaye the prophete, hir savoryng shal be ful of bitter galle ; and

¹ Pleasures (Fr. *délices*). ² Nostrils.

touchynge of al hir body ycovered with fir that nevere shal quenche and with wormes that nevere shul dyen, as God seith by the mouth of Ysaye. And for as much as they shul nat wene that they may dyen for peyne, and by hir deeth flee fro peyne, that may they understonden by the word of Job, that seith, "Ther as is the [18,455] shadwe of deeth." Certes a shadwe hath the liknesse of the thyng of which it is shadwe, but shadwe is nat the same thyng of which it is shadwe. Right so fareth the peyne of helle; it is lyk deeth for the horrible angwissh; and why? For it peyneth hem evere as though they sholde dye anon, but certes, they shal nat dye, for as seith Seint Gregorie, "To wrecche caytyves shal be deeth with-oute deeth, and ende with-uten ende, and defaute with-oute failynge, for hir deeth shal alwey lyven and hir ende shal everemo bigynne, and hir defaute shal nat faille;" and therfore seith Seint John the Evaungelist, "They shullen folwe deeth and they shul nat fynde hym, and they shul desiren to dye and deeth shal flee fromem."

[18,460] And eek Job seith that in helle is noon ordre of rule, and al be it so that God hath creat alle thynges in right ordre and no thyng with-uten ordre, but alle thynges been ordeyned and nombred; yet nathelees, they that been dampned been no thyng in the ordre, ne

holden noon ordre, for the erthe ne shal bere hem no fruyt, for, as the prophete David seith, "God shal destroie the fruyt of the erthe as fro hem, ne water ne shal geve hem no moisture, ne the eyr no refresshyng, ne fyr no light." For as seith Seint Basilie, "The brennyng of the fyr of this world shal God geven in helle to hem [18,465] that been dampned, but the light and the cleernesse shal be geven in hevene to hise children, right as the goode man geveth flessch to hise children and bones to his houndes." And for they shullen have noon hope to escape, seith Seint Job atte laste, that ther shal horroure and grisly drede dwellen¹ with-oute ende.

Horroure is alwey drede of harm that is to come, and this drede shal evere dwelle in the hertes of hem that been dampned; and therfore han they lorn al hire hope for sevene causes. First, for God that is hir juge shal be with-oute mercy to hem, and they may nat plese hym ne noon of hise halwes;² ne they ne may geve no thyng for hir raunsoun; ne they have no voys to speke to hym; ne they may nat fle fro peyne; ne they have no goodnesse in hem that they mowe shewe to deliver [18,470] hem fro peyne. And therfore seith Salomon, "The wikked man dyeth, and whan **he is deed** he shal have noon hope to escape

¹ Remain. ² Holy ones.

fro peyne.” Who-so thanne wolde wel understande the peynes and bithynke hym weel that he hath deserved thilke peynes for his synnes, certes, he sholde have moore talent to siken¹ and to wepe, than for to syngen and to pleye, for as that seith Salomon, “Who-so that hadde the science² to know the peynes that been establissed and ordeyned for synne, he wolde make sorwe.” Thilke science, as seith Seint Augustyn, maketh a man to waymenten³ in his herte.

The fourthe point that oghte maken a man to have contricioun is the sorweful remembrance of the good that he hath left to doon heere in erthe, and eek the good that he hath [18,475] lorn. Soothly, the goode werkes that he hath left, outhere they been the goode werkes that he hath wrought er he fel in to deedly synne, or elles the goode werkes that he wrought while he lay in synne. Soothly, the goode werkes that he dide bifore that he fel in synne been al mortefied and astoned,⁴ and dulled, by the ofte synnyng. The othere goode werkes that he wrought while he lay in deedly synne, thei been outrely dede as to the lyf perdurable in hevene.

Thanne thilke goode werkes that been mortefied by ofte synnyng, whiche goode werkes

¹ Desire to sigh. ² Wisdom. ³ Wail. ⁴ Killed and wounded.

he dide whil he was in charitee, ne mowe
nevere quyken agayn with-uten verray peni-
tence ; and ther-of seith God by the mouth of
Ezechiel, " That if the rightful man returne
agayn from his rightwisnesse and werke wikked-
[18,480] nesse, shal he lyve ? Nay, for alle the
goode werkes that he hath wrought ne shul
nevere been in remembrance, for he shal dyen in
his synne." And up-on thilke chapitre seith
Seint Gregorie thus : " That we shulle under-
stonde this principally, that whan we doon deed-
ly synne it is for noght thanne to rehercen or
drawen in-to memorie the goode werkes that we
han wrought biforn ;" for certes, in the werkyng
of the deedly synne ther is no trust to no good
werk that we han doon biforn, that is for to
seyn, as for to have therby the lyf perdurable
in hevene ; but nathelees, the goode werkes
quyken agayn and comen agayn and helpen
and availlen to have the lyf perdurable in
[18,485] hevene whan we han contricioun. But
soothly, the goode werkes that men doon whil
they been in deedly synne, for as much as they
were doon in deedly synne, they may nevere
quyke agayn ; for certes, thyng that nevere
hadde lyf may nevere quykene ; and nathelees,
al be it that they ne availle noght to han the
lyf perdurable, yet availlen they to abregge of
the peyne of helle, or elles to geten tempora^l
richesse, or elles that God wole the rather en

lumyne and lightne the herte of the synful man to have repentaunce. And eek they availlen for to usen a man to doon goode werkes that the feend have the lasse power of his soule. And thus the curteis Lord Jhesu Crist wole that no good werk be lost, for in somewhat it [18,490] shal availe. But, for as muche as the goode werkes that men doon whil they been in good lyf been al mortefied by synne folwyng, and eek sith that alle the goode werkes that men doon whil they been in deedly synne been outrelly dede, for to have the lyf perdurable, wel may that man that no good werk ne dooth synge thilke newe Frenshe song, "*Fay tout perdu — mon temps et mon labour.*"¹

For certes synne bireveth a man bothe goodnesse of nature and eek the goodnesse of grace, for soothly, the grace of the Hooly Goost fareth lyk fyr that may nat been ydel, for fyr fayleth anoon as it forleteth² his wirkyng; and right so grace fayleth anoon as it forleteth his werkynge. Then leseth the synful man the goodnesse of glorie that oonly is bilight to goode [18,495] men that labouren and werken. Wel may he be sory thanne that oweth al his lif to God, as longe as he hath lyved and eek as longe as he shal lyve, that no goodnesse ne hath to paye with his dette to God, to whom he oweth al

¹ Quoted also in Chaucer's poem, *Fortune*. ² Giveth over.

his lyf ; for, trust wel, he shal geven acountes, as seith Seint Bernard, of alle the goodes that han be geven hym in this present lyf, and how he hath hem despended ; nought so muche that ther shal nat perisse an heer of his heed, ne a moment of an houre ne shal nat perisse of his tyme, that he ne shal geve of it a rekenyng.

The fifthe thyng that oghte moeve a man to contricioun is remembrance of the passioun that oure Lord Jhesu Crist suffred for oure synnes, for, as seith Seint Bernard, "Whil that I lyve I shal have remembrance of the travaylles that oure Lord Crist suffred in prech-[18,500] yng, his werynesse in travaill yng, hise temptaciouns whan he fasted, hise longe wak-ynges¹ whan he preyde, hise teeres whan that he weepe for pitee of good peple, the wo and the shame and the filthe that men seyden to hym, of the foule spittyng that men spitte in his face, of the buffettes that men gaven hym, of the foule mowes² and of the repreves that men to hym seyden, of the nayles with whiche he was nayled to the croys, and of al the remenaunt of his passioun that he suffred for my synnes and no thyng for his gilt."

And ye shul understonde that in mannes synne is every manere of ordre or ordinaunce turned up-so-down. For it is sooth that God

¹ Watchings ² Mouths.

and resoun and sensualitee and the body of man been ordeyned that everich of thise foure thynges sholde have lordshipe over that oother, [18,505] as thus: God sholde have lordshipe over resoun, and resoun over sensualitee, and sensualitee over the body of man; but soothly, whan man synneth al this ordre or ordinaunce is turned up-so-doun. And therfore thanne for-as-muche as the resoun of man ne wol nat be subget ne obeisant to God that is his lord by right, therfore leseth it the lordshipe that it sholde have over sensualitee, and eek over the body of man. And why? For sensualitee rebelleth thanne agayns resoun, and by that wey leseth resoun the lordshipe over sensualitee and over the body, for, right as resoun is rebel to God, right so is bothe sensualitee rebel to resoun and the body also.

[18,510] And certes, this disordinaunce and this rebellioun oure Lord Jhesu Crist aboghte¹ up-on his precious body ful deere; and herkneþ in which wise. For as muche thanne as resoun is rebel to God, therfore is man worthy to have sorwe and to be deed. This suffred oure Lord Jhesu Crist for man, after that he hadde be bitraysed of his disciple, and distreyned and bounde, so that his blood brast⁸ out at every nayl of hise handes, as scith Seint Augustyn. And forther-over for as muchel as re-

¹ Suffered for. ² Constrained. **Burst.**

soun of man ne wol nat daunte sensualitee whan it may, therfore is man worthy to have shame, and this suffred oure Lord Jhesu Crist for man whan they spetten in his visage. And forther-over for as muchel thanne as the caytyf¹ body of man is rebel bothe to resoun and to sensualitee, therfore is it worthy the deeth, and [18,515] this suffred oure Lord Jhesu Crist for man up-on the croys where as ther was no part of his body free with-outen greet payne and bitter passioun.²

And al this suffred Jhesu Crist that nevere forfeted,³ [and therfore resonably may be said of Jhesu in this manere :⁴] "To muchel am I peyned for the thynges that I nevere deserved, and to muche defouled for shendshipe⁵ that man is worthy to have." And therfore may the synful man wel seye, as seith Seint Bernard, "Accursed be the bitternesse of my synne, for which ther moste be suffred so muchel bitternesse ;" for certes, after the diverse disconcordaunces of oure wikkednesses was the passioun of Jhesu Crist ordeyned in diverse thynges, as thus ; certes, synful mannes soule is bitraysted of the devel by coveitise of temporeel prosperitee, and scorned by deceite whan he cheseth⁶ flesshly delices,⁷ and yet is it tormented by inpacience⁸ of adversitee and dis-

¹ Wretched. ² Suffering. ³ Transgressed. ⁴ Not in Elles. MS
⁵ Ruin. ⁶ Chooseth. ⁷ Luxuries. ⁸ Impatience.

peir, by servage and subjeccioun of synne, and [18,520] atte laste it is slayn fynally. For this disordinaunce of synful man was Jhesu Crist bitraysed, and after that he was bounde that cam for to unbynden us of synne and peyne. Thanne was he by-scorned that oonly sholde han been honoured in alle thynges and of alle thynges. Thanne was his visage, that oghte be desired to be seyn of al man kynde, in which visage aungels desiren to looke, vileynsly bispet ; thanne was he scourged that no thyng hadde agilt ; and finally thanne was he crucified and slayn. Thanne was acompliced the word of Ysaye, that seith, that he was wounded [18,525] for oure mysdedes and defouled for oure felonies. Now, sith that Jhesu Crist took up-on hym-self the peyne of alle oure wikkednesses, muchel oghte synful man wepen and bi-wayle that for hise synnes Goddes sone of hev-ene sholde al this peyne endure.

The sixte thyng that oghte moeve a man to contricioun is the hope of thre thynges ; that is to seyn, forgifnesse of synne, and the gifte of grace wel for to do, and the glorie of hevене, with which God shal gerdone ¹ a man for hise goode dedes.

And, for as muche as Jhesu Crist geveth us thise giftes of his largesse, and of his sovereyn bountee,² therfore is he cleped *Jhesus Naza-*

¹ Reward. ² Goodness.

renus, rex Judæorum. *Jhesus* is to seyn save-our, or salvacioun, on whom men shul hope to have forgifnesse of synnes, which that is proprely salvacioun of synnes ; and therfore seyde the aungel to Joseph, "Thou shalt clepen his name Jhesus that shal saven his peple of hir [18,530] synnes." And heer-of seith Seint Peter, "Ther is noon oother name under hev-ene that is geve to any man by which a man may be saved," but oonly Jhesus. *Nazarenus* is as muche for to seye as florisslynge, in which a man shal hope that he that geveth hym remissioun of synnes shal geve hym eek grace wel for to do, for in the flour is hope of fruyt in tyme comynge, and in forgifnesse of synnes, hope of grace wel for to do. "I was atte dore of thyn herte," seith Jhesus, "and cleped for to entre ; he that openeth to me shal have forgifnesse of synne ; I wol entre in-to hym by my grace and soupe with hym (by the goode werkes that he shal doon, whiche werkes been the foode of God), and he shal soupe with me" (by the gretè joye that I shal geven hym).

Thus shal man hope for hise werkes of pen-ance that God shal geven hym his regne,¹ as he bihooteth² hym in the gospel.

[18,535] Now shal a man understonde in which manere shal been his contricioun. I seye that it shal been universal and total. This

¹ Kingdom. ² Promiseth

is to seyn, a man shal be verray repentaunt for alle hise synnes that he hath doon in delit of his thoght, for delit is ful perilous. For ther been two manere of consentynges ; that oon of hem is cleped consentynge of affeccoun, whan a man is moeved to do synne, and deliteth hym longe for to thynke on that synne, and his resoun aperceyveth it wel that it is synne agayns the lawe of God, and yet his resoun refreyneth¹ nat his foul delit or talent, though he se wel apertly² that it is agayns the reverence of God ; al-though his resoun ne consente noght to doon that synne in dede, yet seyn somme doctours that swich delit that dwelleth longe it is ful perilous, al be it nevere so lite.³ And also a man sholde sorwe namely,⁴ for al that evere he hath desired agayn the lawe of God with perfit consentynge of his resoun, for ther-of is no doute that it is deedly synne in consentynge ; [18,540] for certes, ther is no deedly synne that it nas first in mannes thought, and after that in his delit and so forth in-to consentynge, and in-to dede. Wherefore, I seye that many men ne repenten hem nevere of swiche thoghtes and delites, ne nevere shryven hem of it, but oonly of the dede of grete synnes outward ;⁵ wherefore, I seye that swiche wikked delites and wikked thoghtes been subtile bigileres of hem that shullen be dampned.

¹ Restraineth. ² Openly. ³ Little. ⁴ Specially. ⁵ Evident.
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Moore-over, man oghte to sorwe for hise wikkede wordes, as wel as for hise wikkede dedes ; for, certes, the repentaunce of a synguler¹ synne, and nat repente of alle hise othere synnes, or elles repenten hym of alle hise othere synnes and nat of a synguler synne, may nat availle. For certes, God Almyghty is al good, and therfore he forgeveth al, or elles right [18,545] noght. And heer-of seith Seint Augustyn, that God is enemy to everich synnere, and how thanne he that observeth o synne,² shal he have forgifnesse of the remenaunt of hise othere synnes ? Nay.

And forther-over contricioun sholde be wonder sorweful and angwissous, and therfore geveth hym God pleyonly³ his mercy, and therfore “whan my soule was angwissous with-inne me, I hadde remembrance of God, that my preyere myghte come to hym.” Forther-over contricioun moste be continueel, and that man have stedefast purpos to shriven hym, and for to amenden hym of his lyf ; for, soothly, whil contricioun lasteth man may evere have hope of forgifnesse, and of this comth hate of synne, that destroyeth synne bothe in him-self and eek [18,550] in oother folk, at his power ; for which seith David, “Ye that loven God, hateth wickednesse,” for, trusteth wel, to love God is for to love that he loveth and hate that he hateth.

¹ Single. ² Noteth one sin. ³ Fully (Fr. *plein*, full).

The laste thyng that man shal understonde in contricioun is this, "Wher-of awayleth contricioun?" I seye that som tyme contricioun delivereth a man fro synne; of which that David seith, "I seye," quod David, that is to seyn, "I purposed fermely to shryve me, and thow, Lord, relesedest my synne." And right so as contricioun availleth noght with-outen sad purpos of shrifte, if man have oportunitie, right so litel worth is shrifte or satisfaccioun with-outen contricioun. And moore-over contricioun destroyeth the prisoun of helle, and maketh wayk and fieble alle the strengthes of the develes, and restoreth the giftes of the Hooly Goost and [18,555] of alle goode vertues; and it clenseth the soule of synne and delivereth the soule fro the payne of helle, and fro the compaignye of the devel, and fro the servage of synne, and restoreth it to alle goodes espiituels, and to the compaignye and communyon of hooly chirche.

And forther-over it maketh hym that whilom was sone of ire, to be sone of grace, and alle thise thynges been preved by hooly writ, and therefore he that wolde sette his entente to thise thynges, he were ful wys, for, soothly, he ne sholde nat thanne in al his lyf have corage to synne, but geven his body and al his herte to the service of Jhesu Crist, and ther-of doon hym hommage; for soothly oure sweete Lord Jhesu

Crist hath spared us so debonairly in our folies,
that if he ne hadde pitee of mannes soule a
sory song we myghten alle synge.

The Second Part of Penitence, — Confession.

The seconde partie of penitence is confes-
[18,560] sioun that is signe of contricioun.
Now shul ye understonde what is confessioun,
and wheither it oghte nedes be doon or noon,
and whiche thynges been covenable to verray¹
confessioun.

First shaltow understonde that confessioun
is verray shewynge of synnes to the preest;
this is to seyn "verray," for he moste confessen
hym of alle the condiciouns that bilongen to
his synne, as ferforth as he kan; al moot be
seyd and no thyng excused, ne hyd, ne for-
wrapped, and noght avaunte thee of thy goode
werkes. And forther-over it is necessarie to
understonde whennes that synnes spryngen,
and how they encreessen, and whiche they been.

[18,565] Of the spryngynge of synnes seith
Seint Paul in this wise, that "Right as by a
man synne entred first in-to this world, and
thurgh that synne deeth; right so thilke deeth
entred in-to alle men that synneden;" and this
man was Adam, by whom synne entred in-to
this world whan he brak the comaundementz

¹ Suitable to true.

of God. And therefore, he that first was so myghty that he sholde nat have dyed, bicam swich oon that he moste nedes dye wheither he wolde or noon, and al his progenye in this world that in thilke man synneden.

Looke, that in thestaat of innocence, whan Adam and Eve naked weren in Paradys and no thyng ne hadden shame of hir nakednesse, how that the serpent, that was moost wily of alle othere beestes that God hadde maked, seyde to the womman, "Why comaunded God to yow ye sholde nat eten of every tree in [18,570] Paradys?" The womman answerde, "Of the fruyt," quod she, "of the trees in Paradys we feden us, but soothly, of the fruyt of the tree that is in the myddel of Paradys God forbad us for to ete, and nat touchen it, lest *per aventure* we sholde dyen." The serpent seyde to the womman, "Nay, nay, ye shul nat dyen of deeth, for sothe, God woot that what day that ye eten ther-of youre eyen shul opene and ye shul been as goddes, knowyng good and harm."

The womman thanne saugh that the tree was good to feedyng, and fair to the eyen, and delitable to the sighte. She took of the fruyt of the tree, and eet it, and gaf to hire housbonde, and he eet, and anoon the eyen of hem bothe openeden; and whan that they knewe that they were naked they sowed oi fige leves a maner of breches, to hiden hire membres.

There may ye seen that deedly synne hath first suggestioun of the feend, as sheweth heere by the naddre, and afterward the delit of the flessch, as sheweth heere by Eve, and after that the consentynge of resoun, as sheweth heere [18,575] by Adam. For trust wel, though so were that the feend tempted Eve, that is to seyn the flessch, and the flessch hadde delit in the beautee of the fruyt defended,¹ yet certes til that resoun, that is to seyn Adam, consented to the etynge of the fruyt, yet stood he in thestaat of innocence. Of thilke Adam tooke we thilke synne original, for of hym fleshly descended be we alle, and engendred of vile and corrupt mateere; and whan the soule is put in oure body, right anon is contract original synne, and that that was erst but oonly peyne of concupiscence is afterward both peyne and synne; and therfore be we alle born sones of wratthe and of dampnacioun perdurable,² if it nere baptesme that we receyven, which bynyneth us the culpe.³ But for sothe the peyne dwelleth with us as to temptacioun, which peyne highte concupiscence. Whan it is wrongfully disposed or ordeyned in man it maketh hym coveite by coveitise of flessch, fleshly synne by sighte of hise eyen as to erthely thynges, and coveitise of hynesse by pride of herte.

¹ Forbidden. ² Everlasting. ³ Taketh from us the guilt.

[18,580] Now, as for to speken of the firste coveitise, that is concupiscence after the lawe of oure membres that weren lawefulliche ymaked and by rightful juggement of God. I seye, for-as-muche as man is nat obeisaunt to God, that is his Lord, therfore is the flessch to hym disobeisaunt thurgh concupiscence, which yet is cleped norrissyng of synne, and occasion of synne. Therfore al the while that a man hath in hym the peyne of concupiscence it is impossible but he be tempted somtime and moeved in his flessch to synne, and this thyng may nat faille as longe as he lyveth. It may wel wexe ñeble and faille by vertu of baptesme, and by the grace of God thurgh penitence, but fully ne shal it nevere quenche that he ne shal somtyme be moeved in hym-self, but if he were a refreyded¹ by siknesse, or by malefice² of sor [18,585] cerie, or colde drynkes. For lo, wha seith Seint Paul, "The flessch coveiteth agayn the spirit, and the spirit agayn the flessch ; they been so contrarie and so stryven that a man may nat alwey doon as he wolde. The same Seint Paul after his grete penaunce in water and in lond ; in water by nyght and by day, in greet peril and in greet peyne, in lond, in famyne, in thirst, in coold, and cloothlees, and ones stoned almoost to the deeth, yet seyde he, "Allas ! I caytyf man, who shal delivere me

¹ Cooled (Fr. *refroidir*). ² Evil work. ³ Against.

fro the prisoun of my caytyf body?" And Seint Jerome, whan he longe tyme hadde woned¹ in desert, where as he hadde no compaignye but of wilde beestes, where as he ne hadde no mete but herbes, and water to his drynke, ne no bed but the naked erthe, for which his flessch was blak as an Ethiopeen for heete, and ny destroyed for coold, yet seyde he that the brennyng of lecherie boyled in al his [18,590] body; wherfore, I woot wel sykerly, that they been deceyved that seyn that they ne be nat tempted in hir body. Witnesse on Seint Jame the Apostel, that seith that every wight is tempted in his owene concupiscence, that is to seyn, that everich of us hath matere and occasioun to be tempted of the norissynge of synne that is in his body. And therfore seith Seint John the evaungelist, "If that we seyn that we beth with oute synne, we deceyve us selve, and trouthe is nat in us."

Now shal ye understonde in what manere that synne wexeth or encreesseth² in man. The firste thyng is thilke norissynge of synne of which I spak biforn, thilke fleshly concupiscence; and after that comth the subjeccioun of the devel, this is to seyn the *develles bely*,³ with which he bloweth in man the fir of fleshly [18,595] concupiscence; and after that a man bithynketh hym wheither he wol doon, or no

¹ Dwelt. ² Cf. 19,203. ³ Bellows (Old Eng *belig*, a bag).

thiike thing to which he is tempted. And thanne, if that a man withstonde and weyve the firste entisyng of his flessh, and of the feend, thanne is it no synne, and if it so be that he do nat so thanne feelet he anoon a flambe of delit, and thanne is it good to be war and kepen hym wel or elles he wol falle anon in to consentyng of synne, and thanne wol he do it if he may have tyme and place. And of this matere seith Moyses,¹ by the devel, in this manere: The feend seith, "I wole chace and pursue the man by wikked suggestioun, and I wole hente hym by moevyng or stiryng of synne; I wol departe my prise, or my praye, by deliberacioun, and my lust shal been accompliced in delit; I wol drawe my swerd in consentyng," — for certes, right as a swerd departeth a thyng in two peces, right so consentyng departeth God fro man, — "and thanne wol I sleen hym with myn hand in dede of synne;" [18,600] thus seith the feend; for certes, thanne is a man al deed in soule. And thus is synne accompliced by temptacioun, by delit, and by consentyng, and thanne is the synne cleped actueel.

For-sothe synne is in two maneres, outhur it is venial, or deedly synne. Soothly, whan man loveth any creature moore than Jhesu Cristoure Creatour, thanne is it deedly synne. And

¹ The source of this story is unknown.

venial synne is it, if man love Jhesu Crist lasse than hym. For-sothe the dede of this venial synne is ful perilous, for it amenuseth¹ the love that men sholde han to God moore and moore. And therefore if a man charge hym self with manye swiche venial synnes, certes, but if so be that he som tyme discharge hym of hem by shrifte, they mowe ful lightly amenuse in hym al the love that he hath to Jhesu Crist ; and in this wise skippeth venial in-to deedly synne, for certes, the moore that a man chargeth his soule with venial synne, the moore is he enclyned to fallen in-to deedly synne. And therfore [18,605] lat us nat be negligent to deschargen us of venial synnes, for the proverbe seith that “manye smale maken a greet.” And herkne this ensample ; a greet wawe of the see comth som tyme with so greet a violence that it drencheth² the shipe ; and the same harm dooth som tyme the smale dropes of water that entren thurgh a litel crevace in-to the thurrok,³ and in the botme of the shipe, if men be so negligent that they ne discharge hem nat by tyme. And therfore, al-though ther be a difference bitwixe thise two causes of drenchynge, algates⁴ the shipe is dreynt. Right so fareth it somtyme of deedly synne, and of anoyouse⁵ veniale synnes, whan they multiplie in a man so greetly that thilke worldly thynges that he loveth, thurgh

¹ Diminisheth. ² Sinketh. ³ Hold. ⁴ Both ways. ⁵ Hurtful.

whiche he synneth venyally, is as greet in his herte as the love of God, or moore. And therefore the love of every thyng that is nat biset in God ne doon principally for Goddes sake, al though that a man love it lasse than God, yet [18,610] is it venial synne, and deedly synne whan the love of any-thing wexeth in the herte of man as muchel as the love of God or moore. Deedly synne, as seith Seint Augustyn, is “whan a man turneth his herte fro God, which that is verray, sovereyn bountee,¹ that may nat chaunge, and geveth his herte to thyng that may chaunge and flitte;” and certes, that is every thyng, save God of hevene. For sooth is that if a man geve his love, the which that he oweth al to God with al his herte, un-to a creature, certes, as muche as he geveth of his love to thilke creature, so muche he bireveth fro God, and therefore dooth he synne, for he that is dettour to God ne yeldeth nat to God al his dette, that is to seyn, al the love of his herte.

Now, sith man understondeth generally which is venial synne, thanne is it covenable² to tellen specially of synnes whiche that many a man *per aventure* ne demeth hem nat synnes, and ne shryveth hem nat of the same thynges, and yet nathelees they been synnes. Soothly, as thise [18,615] clerkes writer, this is to seyn, that at

¹ Goodness. ² Appropriate.

every tyme that a man eteth or drynketh moore than suffiseth to the sustenance of his body, in certein he dooth synne ; and eek whan he speketh moore than nedeth it is synne ; eke whan he herkneth nat benignely the compleint of the povre ; eke whan he is in heele of body and wol nat faste whan hym oghte faste, withouten cause resonable ; eke whan he slepeth moore than nedeth, or whan he comth by thilke enchesoun¹ to late to chirche, or to othere werkes of charite ; eke whan he useth his wyf withouten sovereyn desir of engendrure, to the honour of God, or for the entente to yelde to his wyf the dette of his body ; eke whan he wol nat visite the sike and the prisoner if he may ; eke if he love wyf or child, or oother worldly thyng, moore than resoun requireth ; eke if he flattere or blandise moore than hym [18,620] oghte, for any necessitee ; eke if he amenuse² or withdrawe the almesse of the povre ; eke if he apparailleth his mete moore deliciously than nede is, or ete to hastily, by likerousnesse ; eke if he tale vanytees at chirche, or at Goddes service, or that he be a talker of ydel wordes, of folye, or of vileynye, for he shal yelden acountes of it at the day of doome ; eke whan he biheteth³ or assureth to do thynges that he may nat perfourne ; eke whan that he by lightnesse or folie mysseyeth

¹ Occasion. ² Diminish. ³ Promiseth.

or scorneth his neighebore ; eke whan he hath any wikked suspccioun of thyng ther he ne woot of it no soothfastnesse ; thise thynges and mo with-oute nombre been synnes, as seith Seint Augustyn.

[18,625] Now shal men understonde that al be it so that noon erthely man may eschue alle venial synnes, yet may he restreyne hym by the brennyng love that he hath to oure Lord Jhesu Crist, and by preyeres and confessioun and othere goode werkes, so that it shal but litel greve ; for, as seith Seint Augustyn, “ If a man love God in swich manere that al that evere he dooth is in the love of God, and for the love of God verrailly, for he brenneth in the love of God, looke, how muche that a drope of water that falleth in a fourneys ful of fyr anoyeth or greveth, so muche anoyeth a venial synne un-to a man that is perfit in the love of Jhesu Crist.” Men may also refreyne venial synne by receyvynge worthily of the precious body of Jhesu Crist ; by receyvynge eek of hooly water, by almsdede, by general confessioun of *Confiteor* at masse,¹ and at complyn,² and by blessynge of bisshopes and of preestes and oother goode werkes.³

¹ That is, at matins. ² Even song. *Completorium*, the last of the hours in the Breviary, just before bedtime. ³ This subject is concluded, after a discussion of the seven deadly sins, at 19,201.

Of the Seven Deadly Sins. De Superbia.

[18,630] Now is it bihovely¹ thyng to telle whiche been the deedly synnes, this is to seyn chieftaynes of synnes. Alle they renne in o lees,² but in diverse maneres. Now been they cleped chieftaynes, for as muche as they been chief, and spryngen of alle othere synnes. Of the roote of thise sevene synnes thanne is pride, the general roote of alle harmes, for of this roote spryngen certein braunches, as ire ; envye ; accidie, or slewthe ; avarice, or coveitise, to commune understondynge ; glotonye, and lecherye. And everich of thise chief synnes hath hise braunches and hise twigges as shal be declared in hire chapitres folwynge. ¹

The Twigs of Pride.

And thogh so be that no man kan outrelly telle the nombre of twigges and of the harmes that cometh of pride, yet wol I shewe a partie of hem, as ye shul understonde. Ther is inobedience, avauntynge, ypocrisie, despit, arrogance, inpudence, swellynge of herte, insolence, elacioun, inpacience, strif, contumacie, presumption, irreverence, pertinacie, veyne glorie, and many another twig that I kan nat declare

¹ Profitable. ² One leash, *i. e.*, pack.

[18,635] Inobedient is he that disobeyeth for despit to the comandementz of God and to hise sovereyns and to his goostly fader. Avauntour is he that bosteth of the harm or of the bountee¹ that he hath doon. Ypocrite is he that hideth to shewe hym swich as he is, and sheweth hym swich as he noght is. Despitous is he that hath desdeyn of his neighebore, that is to seyn of evene Cristene,² or hath despit to doon that hym oghte to do. Arrogant is he that thynketh that he hath thilke bountees in hym that he hath noght, or weneth that he sholde have hem by hise desertes, or elles he demeth [18,640] that he be that he nys nat. Inpudent is he that for his pride hath no shame of hise synnes. Swellynge of herte is whan a man rejoyseth hym of harm that he hath doon. Insolent is he that despiseth in his juggement alle othere folk, as to regard of his value, and of his konnyng, and of his spekyng, and of his beryng. Elacioun is whan he ne may neither suffre to have maister ne felawe. Inpatient is he that wol nat been ytaught ne undernome³ of his vice, and by strif werreieth⁴ trouthe wityngly, and deffendeth his folye. [18,645] Contumax is he that thurgh his indignacioun is agayns everich auctoritee or power of hem that been hise sovereyns. Presumpcioun is whan a man undertaketh an em-

¹ Goodness. ² Fellow Christian. ³ Reminded. ⁴ Combateth

prise¹ that hym oghte nat do, or elles that he may nat do, and this is called surquidie.² Irreverence is whan men do nat honour there as hem oghte to doon, and waiten to be revered. Pertinacie is whan man deffendeth hise folies, and trusteth to muchel in his owene wit. Veyneglorie is for to have pompe and delit in his temporeel hynesse, and glorifie hym in this worldly estaat. Janglynge is whan men speken to muche biforn folk, and clappen as a mille and taken no kepe³ what they seye.

[18,650] And yet is ther a privee spece of pride that waiteth⁴ first to be salewed er he wole salewe, al be he lasse worth than that oother is, *per aventure*; and eek he waiteth or desireth to sitte, or elles to goon above hym in the wey, or kisse pax,⁵ or been encensed,⁶ or goon to offryng⁶ biforn his neighebores, and swiche semblable thynges agayns his duetee,⁷ *per aventure*, but that he hath his herte and his entente in swich a proud desir to be magnified and honoured biforn the peple.

Now been ther two maneres of pride. That oon of hem is with-inne the herte of man and that oother is with oute, of whiche soothly thise forseyde thynges, and mo than I have seyde, apertenen to pride that is in the herte of man.

¹ Enterprize. ² Conceit. ³ Care. ⁴ Seeketh. ⁵ This giving of the "kiss of peace" was a church custom. ⁶ Cf. ll. 450, 7514, 10,599. An "offering" was a sacrifice. The "offering" was the sacrifice of the mass. ⁷ Rights, that which is due.

and that othere speses of pride been with-out, but natheles that oon of thise speses of pride is signe of that oother, right as the gaye leef-sel¹ atte tavernne is signe of the wyn that is in [18,655] the celer. And this is in manye thynges, as in speche and contenance, and in outrageous array of clothyng; for certes, if ther ne hadde be no synne in clothyng, Crist wolde nat have note^d and spoken of the clothyng of thilke riche man in the gospel. And as seith Seint Gregorie, "That precious clothyng is cowpable for the derthe² of it, and for his softenesse and for his strangenesse and degisy-nesse,³ and for the superfluitee, and for the in-ordinat scantnesse of it."

Allas! may men nat seen as in oure dayes the synful costlewe array of clothyng, and namely in to muche superfluite, or elles in to desordinat scantnesse?

As to the firste synne, in superfluitee of clothyng, which that maketh it so deere to [18,660] harm of the peple, nat oonly the cost of embrowdyng, the degise, endentyng, bar-ryng, owndyng,⁴ palyng, wyndyng or bend-ying, and semblable wast of clooth in vanitee, but ther is also costlewe furring in hir gownes, so muche powsonyng⁵ of chisel to maken holes, so muche daggyng of sheres, forth with

¹ Leafy shelter. Cf. l. 4061.

² Waving (Lat. *unda*, a wave)

⁴ Dearness.

⁵ Puncturing.

³ Disguisedness.

the superfluitee in lengthe of the forseide gownes, trailynge in the dong, and in the mire, on horse and eek on foote, as wel of men as of wommen, that al thilke trailynge is verrailly as in effect wasted, consumed, thredbare, and roten with donge, rather than it is geven to the povre to greet damage of the forseide povre folk. And that in sondry wise ; this is to seyn, that the moore that clooth is wasted, the moore it costeth to the peple for the scantnesse. And forther-over if so be that they wolde geven swich powsoned and dagged clothyng to the povre folk, it is nat convenient to were for hire estaat, ne suffisant to beete¹ hire necessitee to kepe hem fro the distemperance of the firmament.

[18,665] Up-on that oother side to speken of the horrible disordinat scantnesse of clothyng as been thise kuttid sloppes, or haynse-lyns,² that thurgh hire shortnesse ne covere nat the shameful membres of man to wikked entente. Allas ! somme of hem shewen the boce³ of hir shape, and the horrible swollen membres, that semeth lik the maladie of hirnia, in the wrappyng of hir hoses ;² and eek the buttokes of hem faren as it were the hyadre part of a she ape in the fulle of the moone. And moore-over the wrecched swollen membres that they shewe thurgh the degisyng, in departyng of

¹ Help. ² Breeches. ³ Boss.

hire hoses in whit and reed, semeth that half
 hir shameful privee membres weren flayne.¹
 And if so be that they departen hire hoses in
 othere colours, as is whit and blak, or whit and
 [18,670] blew, or blak and reed, and so forth,
 thanne semeth it as by variaunce of colour that
 half the partie of hire privee membres were
 corrupt by the fir of Seint Antony, or by can-
 cre, or by oother swich meschaunce. Of the
 hyndre part of hir buttokes it is ful horrible for
 to see, for certes, in that partie of hir body
 ther as they purgen hir stynkyng ordure, that
 foule partie shewe they to the peple prouwdly in
 despit of honestitee,² the which honestitee that
 Jhesu Crist and hise freendes observede to
 shewen in hir lyve.

Now of the outrageous array of wommen,
 God woot that though the visages of somme of
 hem seme ful chaast and debonaire, yet notifie
 they in hire array of atyr likerousnesse and
 pride. I sey nat that honestitee in clothyng
 of man or womman is uncovenable,³ but certes
 the superfluitee or disordinat scantitee of cloth-
 [18,675] ynge is reprevable. Also the synne
 of aornement, or of apparaille, is in thynges
 that apertenen to ridyng, — as in to manye
 delicat horses that been hoolden for delit, that
 been so faire, fatte, and costlewe, and also to
 many a vicious knave that is sustened by cause

¹ Stripped of the skin. ² Decency. ³ Unsuitable.

of hem ; in to curious harneys, as in sadeles, in crouperes, peytrels,¹ and bridles covered with precious clothyng, and riche barres, and plates of gold, and of silver ; for which God seith, by Zakarie the prophete, "I wol confounde the rideres of swiche horses." This folk taken litel reward² of the ridyng of Goddes sone of hevene and of his harneys whan he rood up on the asse, and ne hadde noon oother harneys but the povre clothes of hise disciples, ne we ne rede nat that evere he rood on oother beest. I speke this for the synne of superfluitee and nat for resonable honestitee, whan reson it requireth.

[18,680] And forther, certes, pride is greetly notified in holdyng of greet meynee³ whan they be of litel profit, or of right no profit ; and namely whan that meynee is felonous and damageous to the peple, by hardynesse⁴ of heigh lordshipe, or by wey of offices, for certes, swiche lordes sellen thanne hir lordshipe to the devel of helle whanne they sustenen the wikkednesse of hir meynee. Or elles whan this folk of lowe degree, as thilke that holden hostelries, sustenyng the thefte of hire hostilers, and that is in many manere of deceites, thilke manere of folk been the flyes that folwen the hony, or elles the houndes that folwen the careyne. Swich forseide folk stranglen spiritually hir

¹ Poitrels. ² Regard. ³ Company of servants. ⁴ Severity.

[18,685] lordshipes, for which thus seith David the prophete, “Wikked deeth moote come up thilke lordshipes, and God geve that they moote descenden in-to helle al doun, al doun, for in hire houses been iniquitees and shrewednesses, and nat God of hevene.” And certes, but if they doon amendement, right as God gaf his benysoun to Pharaο by the service of Jacob, and to Laban by the service of Joseph, right so God wol geve his malisoun to swiche lordshipes as sustenen the wikkednesse of hir servauntz, but if they come to amendement.

Pride of the table appeereth eek ful ofte, for certes, riche men been cleped to festes and povre folk been put away and rebuked. Also in excesse of diverse metes and drynkes, and namely ¹ swiche manere bake-metes and dissh-metes brennyng of wilde fir, and peynted and castelled with papir, and semblable wast, so that it is abusoun for to thynke. And eek in to greet preciousnesse of vessel and curiositee of mynstralcie, by whiche a man is stired the [18,690] moore to delices of luxurie, if so be that he sette his herte the lasse up-on oure Lord Jhesu Crist, certeyn it is a synne and certainly the delices myghte been so grete in this caas that man myghte lightly ² falle by hem in-to deedly synne.

The especes that sourden ³ of pride, soothly,

¹ Especially. ² Easily. ³ Rise (Fr. *sourdre*, Lat. *surgere*).

whan they sourden of malice ymaged, avised, and forncast, or elles of usage, been deedly synnes, it is no doute ; and whan they sourden by freletee unavysed and sodeynly withdrawen ageyn, al been they grevouse synnes, I gesse that they ne been nat deedly.

Now myghte men axe wher-of that pride sourdeth and spryngeth, and I seye, somtyme it spryngeth of the goodes of nature, and somtyme of the goodes of fortune, and somtyme of the goodes of grace. Certes, the goodes of nature stonden outhur in goodes of body or in [18,695] goodes of soule. Certes, goodes of body been heele of body, as strengthe, delivernesse,¹ beautee, gentries,² franchise ;³ goodes of nature of the soule been good wit, sharpe understandyng, subtil engyn,⁴ vertu natureel, good memorie ; goodes of fortune been richesse, hyghe degrees of lordshipes, preisynges of the peple ; goodes of grace been science,⁵ power to suffre spiritueel travaille, benignitee, vertuous contemplacioun, withstondyng of temptacioun, and semblable thynges ; of whiche forseyde goodes, certes, it is a ful greet folye a [18,700] man to priden hym in any of hem alle. Now as for to speken of goodes of nature ; God woot that som tyme we han hem in nature as muche to oure damage as to oure profit. As for to speken of heele of body, certes, it passeth

¹ Agility. ² Nobility. ³ Generosity. ⁴ Ingenuity. ⁵ Wisdom.

ful lightly, and eek it is ful ofte enchesoun¹ of the siknesse of oure soule, for, God woot, the flessh is a ful greet enemy to the soule, and therfore the moore that the body is hool the moore be we in peril to falle. Eke for to pride hym in his strengthe of body, it is an heigh folye, for certes, the flessh coveiteth agayn² the spirit, and ay the moore strong that the flessh is, the sorier may the soule be, and over al this, strengthe of body and worldly hardynesse causeth ful ofte many a man to peril and meschaunce. Eek for to pride hym of his gentrie is ful greet folie,³ for ofte tyme the gentrie of the body binymeth⁴ the gentrie of the soule, and eek we ben alle of o fader and of o mooder, and alle we been of o nature, roten and corrupt, [18,705] bothe riche and povre. For-sothe o manere gentrie is for to preise that apparailleth mannes corage with vertues and moralitees and maketh hym Cristes child, for truste wel, that over what man that synne hath maistrie he is a verray cherl⁵ to synne.

Now been ther generale signes of gentillesse, as eschewynge of vice and ribaudye and servage of synne, in word, in werk, and contaunce, and usynge vertu, curteisye, and clenness,⁶ and to be liberal, that is to seyn, large⁷ by mesure, for thilke that passeth mesure is

¹ Occasion. ² Against. ³ Cf. l. 11, 151, and Chaucer's ballad, *Genetyng*. ⁴ Decreaseth. ⁵ Thrall. ⁶ Purity. ⁷ Generous.

folie and synne. Another is to remembre hym of bountee that he of oother folk hath re-
[18,710] ceyved. Another is to be benigne to hise goode subgetis, wherfore seith Senek, "Ther is no thing moore covenable to a man of heigh estaat, than debonairetee and pitee;" and therfore thise flyes that men clepeth bees, whan they maken hir kyng they chesen oon that hath no prikke wherwith he may styng.

Another is, man to have a noble herte, and a diligent to attayne to heighe vertuouse thynges. Now certes, a man to pride hym in the goodes of grace is eek an outrageous folie, for thilke gifte of grace that sholde have turned hym to goodnesse and to medicine, turneth hym to venym and to confusioun, as seith Seint Gregorie. Certes also, who-so prideth hym in the goodes of fortune, he is a ful greet fool, for som-tyme is a man a greet lord by the morwe, that is a caytyf and a wrecche er it be nyght; [18,715] and somtyme the richesse of a man is cause of his deth, somtyme the delices of a man is cause of the grevous maladye thurgh which he dyeth. Certes, the commendacioun of the peple is somtyme ful fals and ful brotel for to triste,¹—this day they preyse, tomorwe they blame;² God woot, desir to have commendacioun of the peple hath caused deeth to many a bisy man.

¹ Trust. ² Cf. l. 13,331.

Remedium contra peccatum Superbiæ.

Now sith that so is that ye han understonde what is pride, and whiche been the speses of it, and whennes pride sourdeth and spryngeth, now shul ye understonde which is the remedie agayns the synne of pride ; and that is humyly [18,720] tee or mekenesse, that is a vertu thurgh which a man hath verray knoweleche of hym self, and holdeth of hym-self no pris ne deyntee¹ as in regard of hise desertes, considerynge evere his freletee.

Now been ther thre maneres of humylitee, as humylitee in herte, and another humylitee in his mouth, the thridde in hise werkes.

The humilitee in herte is in foure maneres. That oon is whan a man holdeth hym-self as noght worth biforn God of hevene. Another is, whan he ne despiseth noon oother man. The thridde is whan he rekketh nat though men holde hym noght worth. The ferthe is whan he nys nat sory of his humiliacioun.

Also the humilitee of mouth is in foure thynges ; in attempree speche, and in humblesse of speche ; and whan he biknoweth² with his owene mouth that he is swich as hym thynketh that he is in his herte ; another is whan he preiseth the bountee³ of another man and no thyng ther of amenuseth.⁴

¹ Value. ² Acknowledgeth. ³ Goodness. ⁴ Diminisheth

[18,725] Humilitee eek in werkes is in foure maneres ; the firste is whan he putteth othere men biforn hym ; the seconde is to chese the loweste place over al ; the thridde is gladly to assente to good¹ conseil ; the ferthe is to stonde gladly to the award of hise sovereyns, or of hym that is in hyer degree, certein this is a greet werk of humylitee.

Sequitur de Invidia.

After pride wol I speken of the foule synne of envye, which is, as by the word of the philosophre, sorwe of oother mannes prosperitee ; and after the word of Seint Augustyn, it is sorwe of oother mannes wele and joye of othere mennes harm. This synne is platly² agayns the Hooly Goost.¹ Al be it so that every synne is agayns the Hooly Goost, yet nathelees for as muche as bountee aperteneth proprely to the Hooly Goost¹ and envye comth proprely of malice, therfore it is proprely agayn the bountee of the Hooly Goost.

Now hath malice two speses, that is to seyn, hardnesse of herte in wikkednesse, or elles the flesh of man is so blynd that he considereth nat that he is in synne, or rekketh nat that he is in synne, which is the hardnesse of the devel.

[18,730] That oother speche³ of malice is

¹ Not in Elles. MS. ² Flatly (Fr. *plat*, flat). ³ Sort.

whan a man werreyeth¹ trouthe whan he woot that it is trouthe, and eek whan he werreyeth the grace that God hath geve to his neighebore ; and al this is by envye. Certes thanne is envye the worste synne that is, for soothly, alle othere synnes been som tyme oonly agayns o special vertu, but certes, envye is agayns alle vertues, and agayns alle goodneses, for it is sory of alle the bountees of his neighebore ; and in this manere it is divers from alle othere synnes ; for wel unnethe² is ther³ any synne that it ne hath som delit in itself save oonly envye, that evere hath in itself angwissh and sorwe.

The speses of envye been thise ; ther is first, sorwe of oother mannes goodnesse and of his prosperitee, and prosperitee is kyndely³ matere of joye ; thanne is envye a synne agayns kynde. [18,735] The seconde spece of envye is joye of oother mannes harm, and that is proprely lyk to the devel, that evere rejoyseth hym of mannes harm.

Of thise two speses comth bakbityng, and this synne of bakbityng, or detraccion, hath certeine speses, as thus ; som man preiseth his neighebore by a wikke entente, for he maketh alwey a wikked knotte atte laste ende, alwey he maketh a "but" atte laste ende,—that is digne of moore blame than worth is al the preisyng. The seconde spece is that if a

¹ Combatteth. ² Scarcely. ³ Naturally.

man be good, and dooth or seith a thing to good entente, the bakbiter wol turne all thilke goodnesse up-so-doun, to his shrewed¹ entente. The thridde is to amenuse² the bountee of his [18,740] neighebores. The fourthe spece of bakbityng is this, that if men speke goodnesse of a man, thanne wol the bakbiter seyn, "Par-dee! swich a man is yet bet than he," in dispreisyng of hym that men preise.

The fifte spece is this, for to consente gladly and herkne gladly to the harm³ that men speke of oother folk; this synne is ful greet and ay encreeseth after the wikked entente of the bakbiter.

After bakbityng cometh grucchyng or murmuracioun, and somtyme it spryngeth of inpatience agayns God, and somtyme agayns man.

Agayns God it is whan a man grucbeth agayn the peynes of helle, or agayns poverté, or los of catel, agayn reyn or tempest, or elles grucbeth that shrewes han prosperitee, or elles for that goode men han adversitee; and alle thise thynges sholde men suffre patiently, for they comen by the rightful juggement and ordinance [18,745] of God. Somtyme comth grucching of avarice, as Judas grucched agayns the Magdaleyne, whan she enoynte the heved³ of oure Lord Jhesu Crist with hir precious oynement. This maner murmure is swich as whan man gruc

¹ Malicious. ² Depreciate. ³ Head.

cheth of goodnesse that hym-self dooth, or that oother folk doon of hir owene catel.¹

Somtyme comth murmure of pride, as whan Simon the Pharisee grucched agayn the Magdaleyne whan she approched to Jhesu Crist and weepe at his feet for hire synnes. And somtyme grucchyng sourdeth² of envye whan men discovereth a mannes harm that was pryvee, or bereth hym on hond³ thyng that is fals.

Murmure eek is ofte amonges servantz that grucchen whan hir sovereyns bidden hem doon [18,750] lewful⁴ thynges; and, for as muche as they dar nat openly withseye the comaundementz of hir sovereyns, yet wol they seyn harm, and grucche and murmure prively, for verray despit, whiche wordes men clepen "the develes *Pater noster*," though so be that the devel ne hadde nevere *Pater noster*, but that lewed⁵ folk geven it swich a name. Somtyme grucchyng comth of ire, or prive hate that norisseth rancour in herte, as afterward I shal declare. Thanne cometh eek bitterness of herte, thurgh which bitterness every good dede of his neighbor semeth to hym bitter and unsavory. Thanne cometh discord that unbyndeth alle manere of freendshipe. Thanne comth scornynge of his [18,755] neighbor, al do he never so weel. Thanne comth accusynge, as whan man seketh occasioun to anoyen his neighbor, which that

¹ Goods. ² Ariseth. ³ Cf. ll. 10,268, 10,274. ⁴ Lawful. ⁵ Ignorant

is lyk to the craft of the devel, that wait-eth bothe nyght and day to accusen us alle. Thanne comth malignitee, thurgh which a man anoyeth¹ his neighebor prively if he may, and if he noght may, algate his wikked wil ne shal nat wante, as for to brennen his hous pryvely, or empoysone or sleen hise beestes, and semblable thynges.

Remedium contra peccatum Invidiæ.

Now wol I speke of the remedie agayns the foule synne of envye. First is the lovyng of God principal, and lovyng of his neighebor as hym self, for soothly, that oon ne may nat been with-oute that oother. And truste wel, that in the name of thy neighebore thou shalt understonde the name of thy brother; for certes, alle we have o fader fleshly, and o mooder, that is to seyn, Adam and Eve, and eek o Fader es- [18,760] piritueel, and that is God of hevene. Thy neighebore artow holden for to love and wilne hym alle goodnesse, and therfore seith God, "Love thy neighebore as thy selve;" that is to seyn, to salvacioun of lyf and of soule. And moore-over thou shalt love hym in word, and in benigne amonestynge² and chastisynge, and conforten hym in hise anoyes, and preye for hym with al thyn herte. And in dede thou

¹ Harmeth. ² Admonishing.

shalt love hym in swich wise that thou shalt doon to hym in charitee as thou woldest that it were doon to thyn owene persone ; and therfore thou ne shalt doon hym no damage in wikked word, ne harm in his body, ne in his catel, ne in his soule by entissyng of wikked ensample ; thou shalt nat desiren his wyf, ne none of hise thynges. Understood eek, that in the name of neighebor is comprehended his enemy. [18,765] Certes man shal loven his enemy by the comandement of God, and soothly, thy freend shaltow love in God. I seye, thyn enemy shaltow love for Goddes sake by his comandement, for if it were reson that a man sholde haten his enemy, for sothe God nolde nat receyven us to his love that been hise enemys.

Agayns thre manere of thynges that his enemy dooth to hym he shal doon thre thynges, as thus : agayns hate and rancour of herte, he shal love hym in herte ; agayns chidyng and wikkede wordes, he shal preye for his enemy ; and agayn wikked dede of his enemy, he shal doon hym bountee ; for Crist seith, " Loveth youre enemys, and preyeth for hem that speke yow harm, and eek for hem that yow chacen and pursewen, and dooth bountee to hem that yow haten." Loo, thus comaundeth us oure Lord Jhesu [18,770] Crist to do to oure enemys, for soothly nature dryveth us to loven oure freendes, and *parfey*, oure enemys han moore nede to love

Jhan oure freendes, and they that moore nede have, certes, to hem shal men doon goodnesse; and certes, in thilke dede have we remembrance of the love of Jhesu Crist that deyde for hise enemys. And, in as muche as thilke love is the moore grevous to perfourne, in so muche is the moore gretter the merite, and therfore the lovyng of oure enemy hath confounded the venym of the devel; for, right as the devel is disconfited by humylitee, right so is he wounded to the deeth by love of oure enemy. Certes thanne is love the medicine that casteth out the venym of envye fro mannes herte. [18,775] The speses of this paas¹ shullen be moore largely in hir chapitres folwyng declared.

Sequitur de Ira.

After envye wol I discryven the synne of ire, for soothly, who so hath envye upon his neighbor anon he wole comunly fynde hym a matere of wratthe in word, or in dede, agayns hym to whom he hath envye. And as wel comth ire of pride as of envye, for soothly, he that is proude or envyous is lightly² wrooth.

This synne of ire, after the discryvyng of Seint Augustyn, is wikked wil³ to been avenged by word or by dede. Ire, after the philosophre's the fervent blood of man yquyked in his

¹ Passus (branch). ² Easily. ³ Desire.

herte thurgh which he wole harm to hym that [18,780] he hateth. For certes, the herte of man, by eschawfyng¹ and moevyng of his blood, wexeth so trouble that he is out of alle juggement of resoun.

But ye shal understonde that ire is in two maneres; that oon of hem is good and that oother is wikked. The goode ire is by jalousie of goodnesse, thurgh which a man is wrooth with wikkednesse, and agayns wikkednesse; and therefore seith a wys man, that ire is bet than pley. This ire is with debonairetee, and it is wrooth withouten bitterness, nat wrooth agayns the man, but wrooth with the mysdede of the man, as seith the prophete David, *Irascimini, et nolite peccare.*²

Now understondeth that wikked ire is in two maneres, that is to seyn, sodeyn ire, or hastif ire withouten avisement and consentyng of resoun. [18,785] The menyng and the sens of this is that the resoun of man ne consente nat to thilke sodeyn ire, and thanne it is venial. Another ire is ful wikked, that comth of felonie of herte avysed and cast biforn with wikked wil to do vengeance, and therto his resoun consenteth, and soothly, this is deedly synne. This ire is so displesant to God that it troubleth his hous and chaceth tne Hooly Goost out of mannes soule, and wasteth and destroyeth the

¹ Heating. ² Psalm iv. 4, in the Vulgate.

liknesse of God, that is to seyn, the vertu that is in mannes soule, and put in hym the liknesse of the devel, and bynymeth¹ the man fro God that is his rightful lord. This ire is a ful greet plesaunce to the devel, for it is the develes fourneys that is eschawfed with the fir of helle. [18,790] For certes, right so as fir is moore mighty to destroyen erthely thynges than any oother element, right so ire is myghty to destroyen alle spiritueel thynges.

Looke how that fir of smale gleedes² that been almoost dede under asshen wollen quike agayn whan they been touched with brymston. Right so ire wol everemo quyken agayn whan it is touched by the pride that is covered in mannes herte; for certes, fir ne may nat comen out of no thyng, but if it were first in the same thyng natureelly,³ as fir is drawn out of flyntes with steel. And, right so as pride is ofte tyme matere of ire, right so is rancour norice and keper of ire. Ther is a maner tree, as seith Seint Ysidre,⁴ that whan men maken fire of thilke tree and covere the coles of it with asshen soothly, the fir of it wol lasten al a yeer [18,795] or moore, and right so fareth it of rancour; whan it is ones conceyved in the hertes of som men, certein it wol lasten *peraventure* trom oon Estre day unto another Estre day and moore; but certes, thilke man is ful fer fro the mercy of God in thilke while.

¹ Taketh away. ² Coals. ³ By nature. ⁴ Isidor. ⁵ Far

In this forseide develes fourneys ther forgen thre shrewes: pride, that ay bloweth and encreesseth the fir by chidyng and wikked wordes; thanne stant envye, and holdeth the hote iren upon the herte of man with a peire of longe toonges of long rancour; and thanne stant the synne of contumelie or strif and cheeste,¹ and batereth and forgeth by vileyns [18,800] reprevynges.² Certes, this cursed synne anoyeth bothe to the man hym-self and eek to his neighebores. For soothly, almoost al the harm that any man dooth to his neighebores comth of wratthe, for certes, outrageous wratthe dooth al that evere the devel hym comaundeth: for he ne spareth neither Crist, ne his sweete mooder. And in his outrageous anger and ire, alas! alas! ful many oon at that tyme feelet in his herte ful wikkedly both of Crist and of alle hise halwes.³

Is nat this a cursed vice? Yis, certes. Allas! it bynymeth from man his wit and his resoun and al his debonaire lif espiritueel, that sholde kepen his soule.

Certes it bynymeth eek Goddes due lordshipe, and that is mannes soule and the love of hise neighebores. It stryveth eek alday agayn trouthe. It reveth hym the quiete of his herte and subverteth his soule.

[18,805] Of ire comen thise styngynge engen

¹ Debate. ² Recriminations ³ Saints

drures ; first, hate, that is oold wratthe ; discord, thurgh which a man forsaketh his olde freend [that he hath loved¹] ful longe ; and thanne cometh werre, and every manere of wrong that man dooth to his neighebores in body, or in catel. Of this cursed synne of ire cometh eek manslaughtre, and understonde wel that homycide, that is manslaughtre, is in diverse wise. Som manere of homycide is spiritueel, and som is bodily.

Spiritueel manslaughtre is in sixe thynges. First, by hate, as Seint John seith, "He that hateth his brother is homycide." Homycide is eek by bakbitynge ; of whiche bakbiteres seith Salomon, that they han two swerdes with whiche they sleen hire neighebores, for soothly, as [18,810] wikke is to bynyme his good name, as his lyf. Homycide is eek in gevyng of wikked conseil by fraude, as for to geven conseil to areysen² wrongful custumes and taillages,³ of whiche seith Salomon: "Leoun rorynge and bere hongry been like to the crueel lordshipes in withholdyng or abreggyng of the shepe, or the hyre, or of the wages of servauntz, or elles 'n usures or in withdrawyng of the almesse of povre folk." For which the wise man seith, "Fedeth hym that almoost dyeth for hunger ;" for soothly, but if thou feede hym thou sleest hym, and alle thise been deedly synnes. Bodily

¹ Not in Elles. MS. ² Create. ³ Taxes levied by feudal barons

manslaughtre is whan thow sleest him with thy tonge, in oother manere, as whan thou comandest to sleen a man, or elles gevest hym conseil to sleen a man.

Manslaughtre in dede is in foure maneres.¹ That oon is by lawe, right as a justice dampneth hym that is coupable to the deeth; but lat the justice be war that he do it rightfully, and that he do it nat for delit to spille blood, [18,815] but for kepyng of rightwisenesse. Another homicide is that is doon for necessee, as whan o man sleeth another in his defendaunt, and that he ne may noon ootherwise escape from his owene deeth; but certainly if he may escape withouten manslaughtre of his adversarie and sleeth hym he dooth synne and he shal bere penance as for deedly synne. Eek if a man by caas² or aventure shete³ an arwe, or caste a stoon, with which he sleeth a man, he is homicide. Eek if a womman by negli-gence overlyeth hire child in hir slepyng, it is homicide and deedly synne. Eek whan man destourbeth concepcioun of a child, and maketh a womman outhere bareyne by drynkynge venenouse herbes thurgh which she may nat conceyve, or sleeth a child by drynkes wilfully, or elles putteth certeine material thynges in hire [18,820] secree places to see the child, or elles dooth unkyndely⁴ synne by which man or wom-

Seven are detailed, however. ² Chance. ³ Shoot. ⁴ Unnaturally

man shedeth hire nature, in manere or in place ther as a child may nat be conceived, or elles if a woman have conceyved and hurt hir child, and sleeth the child, yet it is homycide. What seye we eek of wommen that morden hir children for drede of worldly shame? Certes, an horrible homicide! Homycide is eek if a man approacheth to a womman by desir of lecherie thurg which the child is perissed, or elles smyteth a womman wityngly thurgh which she leseth hir child. Alle thise been homycides and horrible deedly synnes.

Yet comen ther of ire manye mo synnes, as wel in word, as in thoght and in dede, as he that arretteth¹ upon God, or blameth God of thyng of which he is hym self gilty, or despiseth God, and alle hise halwes,² as doon thise cursede hasardours³ in diverse contrees. This cursed synne doon they whan they feelen in hir hertes ful wikkedly of God and of hise [18,825] halwes; also whan they treten unreverently the sacrament of the auter, — thilke synne is so greet that unnethe⁴ may it been releessed but that the mercy of God passeth alle hise werkes, it is so greet, and he so benigne.

Thanne comth of ire attray⁵ angre, whan a man is sharply amonested in his shrifte to foreleten his synne, thanne wole he be angry and

¹ Imputeth. ² Saints. ³ Cf. ll. 9664, 9735, etc. ⁴ Scarcely
Virulent (O. E. *ater*, poison; Ger. *eiler*, pus).

answeren hokerly¹ and angrily, and deffenden or excusen his synne by unstedfastnesse of his flessch, or elles he dide it for to holde compaignye with hise felawes, or elles he seith, the fend enticed hym, or elles he dide it for his youthe, or elles his compleccioun² is so corageous³ that he may nat forbere, or elles it is his destinee, as he seith, unto a certein age, or elles, he seith, it cometh hym of gentillesse or hise auncestres, and semblable thynges. Alle this manere of folk so wrappen hem in his synnes that they ne wol nat deliveren hem-selt, for soothly, no wight that excuseth hym wylfully of his synne may nat been delivered of his synne, til that he mekely biknoweth his synne.

[18,830] After this thanne cometh sweryng, that is expres agayn the comandement of God; and this bifalleth ofte of anger and of ire. God seith, "Thow shalt nat take the name of thy Lord God in veyn," or in ydel. Also oure Lord Jhesu Crist seith, by the word of Seint Mathew, "Ne wol ye nat swere in alle manere, neither by hevene, for it is Goddes trone, ne by erthe, for it is the bench of his feet, ne by Jerusalem, for it is the citee of a greet kyng, ne by thyn heed, for thou mayst nat make an heer whit ne blak; but seyeth by youre word, ye, ye,' and 'nay, nay;' and what that is

¹ Scornfully (O. E. *hacor*, scorn). ² Temperament. ³ Spirited

moore it is of yvel," seith Crist. For Cristes sake, ne swereth nat so synfully, in dismembrynge of Crist by soule, herte, bones, and body; for certes, it semeth that ye thynke that the cursede Jewes ne dismembred nat ynough the precieuse persone of Crist, but ye [18,835] dismembre hym moore.¹ And if so be that the lawe compelle yow to swere, thanne rule yow after the lawe of God in youre sweryng, as seith Jeremye, 4^o c^o, "*Jurabis² in veritate et in judicio et in justicia.*" Thou shalt kepe thre condicions; thou shalt swere in trouthe, in doom, and in rightwisnesse; this is to seyn, thou shalt swere sooth; for every lesynge is agayns Crist, for Crist is verray trouthe. And thynk wel this, that every greet swerere nat compelled lawefully to swere, the wounde shal nat departe from his hous whil he useth swich unleveful sweryng. Thou shalt sweren eek in doom whan thou art constrained by thy domesman to witnessen the trouthe. Eek thow shalt nat swere for envye, ne for favour, ne for meede, but for rightwisnesse, and for declaracioun of it, to the worshippe of God, and helpyng of thyne evenen³ Cristene. And therefore, every man that taketh Goddes name in ydel, or falsly swereth with his mouth, or elles taketh on hym the name of

Cf. 1. 9548. ² Jer. iv. 2 has "*Jurabis: vivit Dominus,*" etc
fellow.

Crist, to be called a Cristene man, and lyveth agayns Cristes luyvng and his techynge, alle they taken Goddes name in ydel.

[18,840] Looke eek, what Seint Peter seith, *Actuum* 4^o, *Non est aliud nomen sub celo*, etc.: "Ther nys noon oother name," seith Seint Peter, "under hevene geven to men, in which they mowe be saved;" that is to seyn, but the name of Jhesu Crist. Take kepe eek how that the name of Crist so precious is,¹ as seith Seint Paul *ad Philipenses* 2^o, *In nomine Jhesu*, etc.: that "in the name of Jhesu every knee of havenely creatures, or erthely, or of helle, sholden bowe;" for it is so heigh and so worshipful that the cursede feend in helle sholde tremblen to heeren it ynempned. Thanne semeth it that men that sweren so horribly by his blessed name, that they despise hym moore booldely than dide the cursede Jewes, or elles the devel, that trembleth whan he heereth his name.

Now certes, sith that sweryng, but if it be lawefully doon, is so heighly deffended, muche worse is forsweryng falsly and yet nedeles.

What seye we eek of hem that deliten hem in sweryng and holden it a gentrie or a manly dede to swere grete othes? And what of hem that of veray usage² ne cesse nat to swere grete othes, al be the cause nat worth a straw?

Elles. MS. reads "the precious name of Crist." ² Habit.

[18,845] Certes, it is horrible synne. Swerynge sodeynly, with-oute avysement, is eek a synne; but lat us go now to thilke horrible sweryng of adjuracioun and conjuracioun, as doon thise false enchauntours or nigromanciens,¹ in bacyns ful of water, or in a bright swerd, in a cercle, or in a fir, or in a shulder boon² of a sheepe! I kan nat seye but that they doon cursedly and damnably agayns Crist, and al the feith of hooly Chirche.

What seye we of hem that bileeven in divynailes, as by flight or by noyse of briddes, or of beestes, or by sort, by geomancie, by dremes, by chirkyng of dores, or crakyng of houses, by gnawynge of rattes, and swich manere wretchednesse? Certes, al this thyng is deffended by God, and by al hooly Chirche, for which they been acursed til they come to amendement that on swich filthe setten hire bileeve. [18,850] Charmes for woundes or maladie of men, or of beestes, if they taken any effect, it be *peraventure* that God suffreth it, for folk sholden geve the moore feith and reverence to his rame.

Now wol I speken of lesynges,³ which generally is fals signyficacioun of word in entente to deceyven his evene Cristene. Some lesynges, of which ther comth noon advantage to no right; and som lesynges turneth to the ese and

¹ Elles. MS. has "nigromanens." ² Cf. l. 9424. ³ Lyings.

profit of o man, and to disese and damage of another man. Another lesynge for to saven his lyf or his catel. Another lesynge comth of delit for to lye, in which delit they wol forge a long tale and peynten it with alle circumstaunces, where al the ground of the tale is fals. Som lesynge comth for he wole susteine his word; and som lesynge comth of reccheleesnesse with-outen avisement, and semblable thynges.

[18,855] Lat us now touche the vice of flatteryng, which ne comth nat gladly, but for drede, or for coveitise. Flaterye is generally wrongful preisyng. Flatereres been the devcles norices, that norissen hise children with milk of losengerie.¹ For-sothe Salomon seith that flaterie is wors than detraccioun, for somtyme detraccion maketh an hauteyn man be the moore humble, for he dredeth detraccion; but certes, flaterye, that maketh a man to enhauncen his herte and his contenaunce. Flatereres been the develes enchauntours, for they make a man to wene of hym-self be lyk that he nys nat lyk; they been lyk to Judas, that bitraysed God, and thise flatereres bitraysen a man to sellen hym to hise enemy, that is, to the evel. Flatereres been the develes chapelleyns [18,860] that syngen evere *Plucebo*.² I rekene flaterie in the vices of ire. for ofte tyme if

¹ Deception, false flattery. ² Cf. l. 12, 117.

o man be wrooth with another, thanne wole he flatere som wight to sustene hym in his querele.

Speke we now of swich cursynge as comth of irous herte. Malisoun¹ generally may be seyed every maner power or harm. Swich cursynge bireveth man fro the regne² of God, as seith Seint Paul. And ofte tyme swich cursynge wrongfully retorneth agayn to hym that curseth, as a bryd that retorneth agayn to his owene nest. And over alle thyng men oghten eschewe to cursen hire children, and geven to the devel hire engendrure, as ferforth as in hem is ; certes it is greet peril and greet synne.

[18,865] Lat us thanne speken of chidyng and reproche, whiche been ful grete woundes in mannes herte, for they unsowen the semes of freendshipe in mannes herte. For certes, unnethes³ may a man pleyndly⁴ been accorded with hym that hath hym openly revyled and reprevd in disclaundre. This is a ful grisly synne, as Crist seith in the gospel. And taak kepe now, that he that repreveth his neighebor, outhur he repreveth hym by som harm of peyne that he hath on his body, as, "mesel!"⁵ "croked harlot!" or by som synne that he dooth. Now if he reprove hym by harm of peyne, thanne turneth the reprove to Jhesu Crist, for peyne

¹ Malediction. ² Kingdom. ³ Scarcely ⁴ Fully. ⁵ Callin,
him "Leper!"

is sent by the rightwys sonde¹ of God, and by his suffrance, be it meselrie, or maheym, or maladie. And if he reprove hym uncharitably of synne, as "thou dronkelewe harlot!" and so forth, thanne aperteneth that to the rejoysynge of the devel, that evere hath joye that men doon synne.

[18,870] And certes chidyng may nat come but out of a vileyns herte, for after the habundance of the herte speketh the mouth ful ofte. And ye shul understonde, that looke by any way whan any man shal chastise² another, that he be war from chidyng and reprevynge; for trewely but he be war he may ful lightly quyken the fir of angre, and of wratthe, which that he sholde quenche, and *peraventure* sleeth hym which that he myghte chastise with benignitee. For as seith Salomon, "The amyable tonge is the tree of lyf;" that is to seyn, of lyf espriteuel, and soothly, a deslavec³ tonge sleeth the spirites of hym that repreveth and eek of hym that is repreveth. Loo, what seith Seint Augustyn, "Ther is no thyng so lyk the develes child as he that ofte chideth." Seint Paul seith eek, "A⁴ servant of God, bihoveth nat to chide." And how that chidyng be a vileyns thyng bitwixe alle manere folk, vet is it, certes, moost unco-venable bitwixe a man and his wyf, for there is

¹ Righteous sending.
Elles. MS. reads "I."

² Correct.

Impure, or, perhaps, free

nevere reste, and therfore seith Salomon, 'An hous that is uncovered in reyn¹ and droppynge [18,875] and a chidyng wyf been lyke." A man that is in a droppynge hous in manye places, though he eschewe the droppynge in o place, it droppeth on hym in another place; so fareth it by a chydynge wyf, but she chide hym in o place she wol chide hym in another; and therfore, "Bettre is a morsel of breed with joye than an hous ful of delices with chidyng," seith Salomon. Seint Paul seith, "O ye wommen, be ye subgetes to youre housbondes, and ye men loveth youre wyves." *Ad Colossenses* 3°.

Afterward speke we of scornynge, which is a wikked synne, and namely² whan he scorneth a man for hise goode werkes; for certes, swiche scorneres faren lyk the foule tode that may nat endure to smelle the soote savour of [18,880] the vyne whanne it florissbeth. Thise scorneres been partyng-felawes with the devel, for they han joye whan the devel wynneth, and sorwe whan he leseth; they been adversaries of Jhesu Crist, for they haten that he loveth, that is to seyn, salvacioun of soule.

Speke we now of wikked conseil, for he that wikked conseil geveth is a traytour; he deceyveth hym that trusteth in hym; *Ut Achitofel ad Absolonem*.³ But natheles yet is his wikked

¹ "In reyn" not in Elles. MS. ² Especially. ³ "Achitofel" was David's traitorous counselor who deserted to Absalom. "A name Dryden says, "to all succeeding ages curst."

conseil first agayn hymself, for, as seith the wise man, "Every fals luyvng hath his propertee in hym-self, that he that wole anoye another man, he anoyeth first hym self." And men shul understonde that man shal nat taken his conseil of fals folk, ne of angry folk, or grevous folk that loven specially to muchel hir owene profit ; ne to muche worldly folk ; namely in conseilynge of soules.

[18,885] Now comth the synne of hem that sowen and maken discord amonges folk ; which is a synne that Crist hateth outrely, and no wonder is, for he deyde for to make concord. And moore shame do they to Crist, than dide they that hym crucifiede, for God loveth bettre that freendshipe be amonges folk than he dide his owene body, the which that he gaf for unitee. Therfore been they likned to the devel, that evere been aboute to maken discord.

Now comth the synne of double tonge swiche as speken faire byforn folk and wikkedly bihynde, or elles they maken semblant as though they speeke of good entencioun or elles in game and pley, and yet they speke of wikked entente.

Now comth biwreying of conseil thurgh which a man is defamed, certes, unnethe may he restore the damage.

Now comth manace, that is an open folye, for

he that ofte manaceth, he threteth moore than he may perfourne ful ofte tyme.

[18,890] Now cometh ydel wordes that is with outen profit of hym that speketh tho wordes, and eek of hym that herkneth tho wordes. Or elles ydel wordes been tho that been nedelees, or with outen entente of natureel profit. And al be it that ydel wordes been som tyme venial synne, yet sholde men douten hem, for we shul geve rekenynge of hem bifore God.

Now comth janglynge, that may nat been with oute synne. And as seith Salomon, it is a synne of apert¹ folye, and therfore a philosophre seyde, whan men axed hym how that men sholde plesse the peple, and he answerde, "Do manye goode werkes and spek fewe jangles."

After this comth the synne of japeres, that been the develes apes, for they maken folk to laughe at hire japerie as folk doon at the gawdes² of an ape. Swich japeres deffendeth [18,895] Seint Paul. Looke, how that vertuous wordes and hooly woordes conforten hem that travaillen in the service of Crist, right so conforten the vileyns wordes and knakkes³ of japeris hem that travaillen in the service of the devel. Thise been the synnes that comen of the tonge, that comen of ire, and of othere synnes mo.

¹ Open. ² Ridiculous tricks. ³ Jokes.

Sequitur remedium contra peccatum Iræ.

The remedie agayns ire is a vertu that men clepen mansuetude,¹ that is debonairetee,² and eek another vertu that men callen pacience, or suffrance.

Debonairetee withdraweth and refreyneth the stirynges and the moevynges of mannes corage³ in his herte, in swich manere that they ne skippe⁴ nat out by angre ne by ire.

Suffrance suffreth swetely alle the annoyances and the wronges that men doon to man [18,900] outward. Seint Jerome seith thus of debonairetee, that it dooth noon harm to no vight, ne seith, ne for noon harm that men doon or seyn he ne eschawfeth⁵ nat agayns his resoun. This vertu som tyme comth of nature, for, as seith the philosophre, "A man is a quyk thyng by nature, debonaire and tretable⁶ to goodnesse;" but whan debonairetee is enformed⁷ of grace thanne is it the moore worth.

Pacience, that is another remedie agayns ire. It is a vertu that suffreth swetely every mannes goodnesse, and is nat wrooth for noon harm that is doon to hym. The philosophre seith that pacience is thilke vertu that suffreth debonairely alle the outrages of adversitee and

¹ Gentleness. ² Meekness, good disposition. ³ Spirit. ⁴ Escape. Becometh excited. ⁵ Disposed ⁷ Taught.

every wikked word. This vertu maketh a man lyk to God, and maketh hym Goddes owene deere child, as seith Crist, this vertu disconfiteth thyn enemy, and therfore seith the wise man, "If thou wolt venquysse thyn enemy, [18,905] lerne to suffre." And thou shalt understonde that man suffreth foure manere of grevances in outward thynges; agayns the whiche foure he moot have foure manere of paciencies.

The firste grevance is of wikkede wordes; thilke suffrede Jhesu Crist with-outen grucchyng, ful patiently, whan the Jewes despised and reprevd hym ful ofte. Suffre thou therfore patiently, for the wise man seith, "If thou stryve with a fool though the fool be wrooth or though he laughe, algate thou shalt have no reste."

That oother grevance outward is to have damage of thy catel. Ther-agayns suffred Crist ful patiently when he was despoyled of al that he hadde in this lyf, and that nas but hise clothes.

The thridde grevance is a man to have harm in his body. That suffred Crist ful patiently in al his passioun.

[18,910] The fourthe grevance is in outrageous labour in werkes. Wherfore I seye that folk that maken hir servantz to travaillen to grevously, or out of tyme, as on haly

dayes, soothly they do greet synne. Heer agayns suffred Crist ful paciently and taught us pacience, whan he baar up-on his blissed shulder the croys up-on which he sholde suffren despitous deeth. Heere may men lerne to be pacient, for certes, noght oonly Cristen men been pacient for love of Jhesu Crist and for gerdoun¹ of the blisful lyf that is perdurable,² but certes the olde payens that nevere were Cristene, commendeden and useden the vertu of pacience.

A philosophre up-on a tyme that wolde have beten his disciple for his grete trespas for which he was greetly amoeved,³ and broghte a yerde to scoure with the child;⁴ and whan this child saugh the yerde, he seyde to his maister, "What thenke ye do?" "I wol bete thee," quod the maister, "for thy correccioun." [18,915] "For-sothe," quod the child; "ye oghten first correcte youre self, that han lost al youre pacience for the gilt of a child." "For-sothe," quod the maister, al wepynge, "thow seyst sooth; have thow the yerde, my deere sone, and correcte me for myn inpacience." Of pacience comth obedience, thurgh which a man is obedient to Crist and to alle hem to whiche he oghte to been obedient in Crist. And understond wel that obedience is perfit whan that

¹ Reward. ² Everlasting. ³ Excited. ⁴ A stick to scourge the child with.

a man dooth gladly and hastily, with good herte, entierly, al that he sholde do. Obedience generally is to perfourne the doctrine of God and of his sovereyns, to whiche hym oghte to ben obeisaunt in alle rightwisnesse.

Sequitur de Accidia.

[18,920] After the synne of envye and of ire, now wol I speken of the synne of accidie ;¹ for envye blyndeth the herte of man, and ire troubleth a man, and accidie maketh hym hevvy, thoghtful and wrawful.² Envye and ire maken bitternesse in herte, which bitternesse is mooder of accidie and bynymeth³ hym the love of alle goodnesse. Thanne is accidie the angwissh of troubled herte, and Seint Augustyn seith, it is anoy⁴ of goodnesse and joye of harm. Certes this is a dampnable synne, for it dooth wrong to Jhesu Crist, in as muche as it bynymeth the service that men oghte doon to Crist with alle diligence, as seith Salomon ; but accidie dooth no swich diligence. He dooth alle thyng with anoy, and with wrawnesse,⁵ slaknesse, and excusacioun, and with ydelnesse, and unlust ;⁶ for which the book seith, "Acursed be he that dooth the service of God negligently."

Thanne is accidie enemy to everich estaat of

¹ The theologicai term for sloth, negligence arising from discontent *ennui* (Greek, *ἀκηδία*). ² Peevish. ³ Taketh from. ⁴ Harm. ⁵ Peevishness. ⁶ Disrelish.

man, for certes the estaat of man is in thre [18,925] maneres. Outher it is thestaat of innocence, as was thestaat of Adam biforn that he fil into synne, in which estaat he was holden to wirche as in heriynge and adowrynge¹ of God. Another estaat is estaat of synful men, in which estaat men been holden to laboure in preiynge to God for amendement of hire synnes. and that he wole graunte hem to aysen out of hir synnes. Another estaat is thestaat of grace, in which estaat he is holden to werkes of penitence ; and certes to alle thise thynges is accidie enemy and contrarie, for he loveth no bisynesse at al. Now certes, this foule swyn, accidie, is eek a ful greet enemy to the liflode² of the body, for it ne hath no purveaunce³ agayn temporeel necessitee, for it forsleweth and forsluggeth, and destroyeth alle goodes temporeles by reccheleesnesse.

The fourthe thyng is, that accidie is lyk to hem that been in the peyne of helle, by-cause of hir slouthe and of hire hevynesse ; for they that been dampned been so bounde that they [18,930] ne may neither wel do, ne wel thynke. Of accidie comth first, that a man is anoyed and encombred for to doon any goodnesse, and maketh that God hath abhomynacion of swich accidie [as seith Seint Johr.⁴].

¹ Praising and adoring ² Life. ³ Provision. ⁴ Not in Elles
MS.

Now cometh slouthe, that wol nat suffre noon hardnesse ne no penaunce, for soothly, slouth is so tendre, and so delicat, as seith Salomon, that he wol nat suffre noon hardnesse, ne penaunce, and therfore he shendeth¹ al that he dooth. Agayns this roten-herted synne of accidie and slouthe sholde men exercise hem-self to doon goode werkes, and manly and vertuously cacchen corage wel to doon, thynkyng that oure Lord Jhesu Crist quiteth² every good dede, be it never so lite. Usage of labour is a greet thyng, for it maketh, as seith Seint Bernard, the laborer to have stronge armes, and harde synwes, and slouthe maketh hem feble and tendre. Thanne comth drede to bigynne to werke anye goode werkes, for certes, he that is enclyñed to synne, hym thynketh it is so greet an emprise for to undertake to doon [18,935] werkes of goodnesse, and casteth in his herte that the circumstaunces of goodnesse been so grevouse and so chargeaunt³ for to suffre, that he dar nat undertake to do werkes of goodnesse, as seith Seint Gregorie.

Now comth wanhope, that is despeir of the mercy of God, that comth somtyme of to muche outrageous sorwe, and somtyme of to muche drede, ymaginyng that he hath doon so muche synne that it wol nat availen hym, though he wolde repenten hym and forsake synne ; thurgh

¹ Ruineth. ² Requitheth. ³ Burdensome.

which despeir or drede he abaundoneth al his herte to every maner synne, as seith Seint Augustin. Which dampnable synne, if that it continue un-to his ende, it is cleped synnyng in the Hooly Goost. This horrible synne is so perilous, that he that is despeired, ther nys no felonye ne no synne that he douteth¹ for to do, as sheweth wel by Judas.

[18,940] Certes, aboven alle synnes thanne is this synne moost displesant to Crist and moost adversarie.

Soothly, he that despeireth hym is lyke the coward champioun recreant [that seith "recreant"² withoute nede. Alas! alas! nedeles is he recreant³], and nedeles despeired. Certes, the mercy of God is evere redy to every penitent, and is aboven alle hise werkes. Allas! kan a man nat bithynke hym on the gospel of Seint Luc xv., where as Crist seith, that as wel shal ther be joye in bevene upon a synful man that dooth penitence, than up-on nynety and nyne rightful men that [nevere ne dede synne, ne³] neden no penitence.

Looke forther in the same gospel, the joye and the feeste of the goode man that hadde lost his sone, whan his sone with repentaunce was retourned to his fader. Kan they nat re-
[18,945] membren hem eek, that as seith Seint Luc xxiii., how that the theef that was hanged

¹ Feareth. ² Acknowledging defeat ³ Not in Elles. MS.

bisyde Jhesu Crist seyde, "Lord, remembre of me, whan thou comest in to thy regne." "Forsothe," seyde Crist, "I seye to thee, to day shaltow been with me in paradys." Certes, ther is noon so horrible synne of man that it ne may in his lyf be destroyed by penitence, thurgh vertu of the passion and of the deeth of Crist. Allas! what nedeth man thanne to been despeired, sith that his mercy so redy is and large? Axe and have.

Thanne cometh sompnolence, that is sloggy slombrynge, which maketh a man be hevy and dul in body and in soule. And this synne comth of slouthe. And certes, the tyme that [18,950] by wey of resoun men sholde nat slepe, that is by the morwe,¹ but if ther were cause resonable, for soothly, the morwe tyde is moost covenable a man to seye hise preyeres, and for to thynken on God, and for to honoure God, and to geven almesse to the povre, that first cometh in the name of Crist. Lo, what seith Salomon? "Who-so wolde by the morwe awaken and seke me, he shal fynde." Thanne cometh negligence or recchelesnesse, that reketh of no thyng; and how that ignoraunce be mooder of alle harm, certes, negligence is the norice. Negligence ne dooth no fors,² whan he shal doon a thyng, wheither he do it weel o' baddely.

¹ Morning. ² Considereth it not important.

[18,955] Of the remedie of thise two synnes, as seith the wise man, that he that dredeth God he spareth nat to doon that him oghte doon, and he that loveth God he wol doon diligence to plesse God by hise werkes and abaundone hym-self with al his myght wel for to doon. Thanne comth ydelnesse, that is the gate of alle harmes. An ydel man is lyk to a place that hath no walles; the develes may entre on every syde and sheten ¹ at hym at discovert,² by temptacion on every syde. This ydelnesse is the thurrok ³ of alle wikked and vileyns thoghtes and of alle jangles, trufles,⁴ and of alle ordure. Certes, the hevene is geven to hem that wol labouren, and nat to ydel folk. Eek David seith, that they ne been nat in the labour of men, ne they shul nat been whipped with men, that is to seyn, in purgation;⁵ certes, thanne semeth it, they shul be tormented with the devel in helle, but if they doon penitence.

Thanne comth the synne that men clepen *tarditas*, as whan a man is to laterede ⁵ or tariynge er he wole turne to God, and certes that is a greet folie. He is lyk to hym that falleth in the dych, and wol nat arise. And this vice comth of a fals hope, that he thynketh that he shal lyve longe, but that hope faileth ful ofte.

¹ Shoot. ² Unprotected. ³ Hold Cf. 18,607. ⁴ Trifles. ⁵ Delayed.

Thanne comth lachesse,¹ that is he that whan he biginneth any good werk, anon he shal forleten it, and stynten, as doon they that han any wight to governe and ne taken of hym namoore kepe anon as they fynden any contrarie or any anoy. Thise been the newe shepherdes that leten hir sheepe wityngly go renne to the wolf, that is in the breres, or do [18,965] no fors of hir owene governaunce. Of this comth poverte and destruccioun, bothe of spiritueel and temporeel thynges. Thanne comth a manere cooldnesse, that freseth al the herte of a man. Thanne comth undevo-cioun, thurgh which a man is blent,² as seith Seint Bernard, and hath swich langour in soule, that he may neither rede ne singe in hooly chirche, ne heere, ne thynke of no devocioun, ne travaille with hise handes in no good werk, that it nys hym unsavory and al apalled.³ Thanne wexeth he slough⁴ and slombry, and soone wol be wrooth, and soone is enclyned to hate and to envye. Thanne comth the synne of worldly sorwe, which as is cleped *tristicia*, that sleeth man, as Seint Paul seith. For certes, swich sorwe werketh to the deeth of the soule and of the body also, for ther-of comth that a man is anoyed of his owene lif; wherfore swich sorwe shorteth fu-

¹ Slackness (Fr. *lacher*, to loosen). ² Blinded. ³ Enfeebled *M. B.* 3053, 15, 141. ⁴ Slow.

[18,970] ofte the lif of man, er that his tyme
be come by wey of kynde.¹

Remedium contra peccatum Accidiæ.

Agayns this horrible synne of accidie, and the branches of the same, ther is a vertu that is called *fortitudo*, or strengthe; that is, an affeccion thurgh which a man despiseth anyouse² thinges. This vertu is so myghty and so vigerous that it dar withstonde myghtily, and wisely kepen hym self fro perils that been wikked, and wrastle agayn the assautes of the devel; for it enhaunceth and enforceth the soule, right as accidie abateth it, and maketh it fieble; for this *fortitudo* may endure by long suffraunce the travailles that been covenable.³

This vertu hath manye speces, and the firste is cleped magnanimitie,⁴ that is to seyn greet corage, for certes ther bihoveth greet corage agains accidie lest that it ne swolwe the soule by the synne of sorwe, or destroye it by wan-[18,975] hope.⁵ This vertu maketh folk to undertake harde thynges and grevouse thynges by hir owene wil wisely and resonably. And for as muchel as the devel fighteth agayns a man, moore by queyntise⁶ and by sleighte than by strengthe, therefore men shal withstonden hym by wit and by resoun and by discrecioun.

¹ Nature. ² Hurtful. ³ Suitable. ⁴ Elles. MS. reads "magnificence," by error. ⁵ Despair. ⁶ Craft.

Thanne arn ther the vertues of feith and hope in God, and in hise seintes, to acheve and accomplice the goode werkes, in the whiche he purposeth fermely to continue. Thanne comth seuretee, or sikernessee, and that is whan a man ne douteth¹ no travaille in tyme comynge of the goode werkes that a man hath bigonne. Thanne comth magnificence, that is to seyn whan a man dooth and perfourneth grete werkes of goodnesse; and that is the ende why that men sholde do goode werkes; for in the acomplissynge of grete goode werkes [18,980] lith the grete gerdoun. Thanne is 'her constaunce, that is stablenesse of corage; and this sholde been in herte by stedefast feith, and in mouth, and in berynge, and in chiere,² and in dede. Eke ther been mo speciale remedies agains accidie in diverse werkes, and in consideracioun of the peynes of helle, and of the joyes of hevene, and in trust of the grace of the Holy Goost, that wole geve hym myght to perfourne his goode entente.

Sequitur de Avaricia.

After accidie wol I speke of avarice and of coveitise, of which synne seith Seint Paule that the roote of alle harmes is coveitise. *Ad Thimothæum* vi. For soothly, whan the herte of a

¹ Feareth. ² Countenance.

man is confounded in it self, and troubled, and that the soule hath lost the confort of God, thanne seketh he an ydel solas of worldly thynges.

Avarice, after the descripcion of Seint Augustyn, is likerousnesse in herte to have erthely [18,985] thynges. Som oother folk seyn that avarice is for to purchacen¹ manye erthely thynges, and no thyng geve to hem that han nede. And understood that avarice ne stant nat oonly in lond ne catel, but somtyme in science² and in glorie, and in every manere of outrageous thyng is avarice and coveitise.

And the difference bitwixe avarice and coveitise is this; coveitise is for to coveite swiche thynges as thou hast nat, and avarice is for to withholde and kepe swiche thynges as thou hast with-oute rightful nede. Soothly this avarice is a synne that is ful dampnable, for al hooly writ curseth it, and speketh agayns that vice, for it dooth wrong to Jhesu Crist; for it bireveth hym the love that men to hym owen, and turneth it bakward agayns alle resoun, [18,990] and maketh that the avaricious man hath moore hope in his catel than in Jhesu Crist, and dooth moore observance in kepyng of his tresor than he dooth to service of Jhesu Crist. And therfore seint Paul, *ad Ephesios* v., that an avaricious man is the thraldom of ydolatrie.

¹ Obtain, in any way. ² Knowledge.

What difference is betwixe an ydolastre and an avaricious man? but that an ydolastre *per aventure* ne hath but o mawmet¹ or two and the avaricious man hath manye; for certes, every floryn in his cofre is his mawmet. And certes, the synne of mawmettrie is the firste thyng that God deffended² in the ten comaundmentz, as bereth wisse *Exodi* capitulo xx.

"Thou shalt have no false goddes bifore me, ne thou shalt make to thee no grave thyng;" thus is an avaricious man that loveth his tresor [18,995] bifore God an ydolastre, thurgh this cursed synne of avarice.

Of coveitise comen thise harde lordshipes thurgh whiche men been distreyned by taylages,³ custumes, and cariages, moore than hire duetee or resoun is; and eek they taken of hire bonde men amercimentz, whiche myghten moore resonably ben cleped extorcions than amercimentz. Of whiche amercimentz and raunsynge of bondemen somme lordes stywardes seyn that it is rightful, for as muche as a cherl hath no temporeel thyng that it ne is his lordes, as they seyn, but certes thise lordshipes doon wrong that bireven hire bonde folk thynges that they nevere gave hem. *Augustinus de Civitate Dei*, libro ix. Sooth is that the condicioun of thraldom and the firste cause of thraldom is for synne. *Genesis* ix.

¹ Idol. From "Mahomet." ² Forbade. ³ Baronial imposts.

Thus may ye seen that the gilt disserveth [19,000] thraldom, but nat nature ; wherfore thise lordes ne sholde nat muche glorifien hem in hir lordshipes, sith that by natureel condicioun they been nat lordes of thralles, but that thraldom comth first by the desert of synne. And forther-over ther as the lawe seith that temporeel goodes of boonde folk been the goodes of hir lordshipes, ye, that is for to understonde, the goodes of the emperour, to defenden hem in hir right, but nat for to robben hem ne reven hem. And therfore seith Seneca, "Thy prudence sholde lyve benignely with thy thralles ; thilke that thou clepest thy thralles been Goddés peple, for humble folk been Cristes freendes, they been contubernyal¹ with the Lord."

Thynk eek that of swich seed as cherles spryngeth, of swich seed spryngen lordes. As [19,005] wel may the cherl be saved as the lord ; the same deeth that take the cherl, swich deeth taketh the lord ; wherfore I rede,² do right so with thy cherl as thou woldest that thy Lord dide with thee if thou were in his plit. Every synful man is a cherl to synne. I rede thee, certes, that thou lord werke in swiche wise with thy cherles that they rather love thee than drede. I woot wel ther is degree above degree, as reson is, and skile it is that men do hir de-

Familiar, literally, dwelling in the same tent. ² Counsel.

voir ther as it is due ; but certes, extorcions and despit of youre underlynges is dampnable.

And forther-over understoond wel that thise conquerours, or tirauntz, maken ful ofte thralles of hem that been born of as roial blood as been they that hem conqueren. This name of thraldom was nevere erst kowth, til that Noe seyde that his sone Canaan sholde be thral to [19,010] hise bretheren for his synne. What seye we thanne of hem that pilen¹ and doon extorcions in hooly chirche ? Certes, the swerd that men geven first to a knyght whan he is newe dubbed signifieth that he sholde deffenden hooly chirche, and nat robben it ne pilen it, and who so dooth is traitour to Crist. And, as seith Seint Augustyn, they been the develes wolves that stranglen the sheepe of Jhesu Crist, and doon worse than wolves, for, soothly, whan the wolf hath ful his wombe² he stynteth to strangle sheepe, but soothly, the pilours and destroyours of Goddes hooly chirche ne do nat so, for they ne stynte nevere to pile.

Now, as I have seyde, sith so is that synne was first cause of thraldom, thanne is it thus, that thilke tyme that al this world was in synne, thanne was al this world in thraldom and subjeccioun ; but certes, sith the time of grace cam, **God ordeyned** that som folk sholde be **moore**

¹ Pillage. ² Belly.

heigh in estaat and in degree, and som folk moore lough, and that everich sholde be served [19,015] in his estaat [and his degree¹], and therfore in somme contrees ther they byen thralles, whan they han turned hem to the feith, they maken hire thralles free out of thraldom. And therfore certes, the lord oweth to his man that the man oweth to his lord. The pope calleth hym-self servaunt of the servauntz of God ; but for as muche as the estaat of hooly chirche ne myghte nat han be, ne the commune profit myghte nat han be kept, ne pees and reste in erthe, but if God hadde ordeyned that som men hadde hyer degree and som men lower, therfore was sovereyntee ordeyned to kepe and mayntene and deffenden hire underlynges or hire subgetz in resoun as ferforth as it lith in hire power, and nat to destroyen hem ne confounde.

Wherfore I seye, that thilke lordes that been lyk wolves that devouren the possessiouns or the catel of povre folk wrongfully, with-uten mercy or mesure, they shul receyven, by the same mesure that they han mesured to povre folk, the mercy of Jhesu Crist, but if it be amended.

[19,020] Now comth deceite bitwixe marchaunt and marchaunt. And thow shalt understonde that marchandise is in manye maneres ;

¹ Not in Elles MS.

that oon is bodily, and that oother is goostly that oon is honeste and leueful,¹ and that oother is deshoneste and unleueful. Of thilke bodily marchandise that is leueful and honeste is this, that there as God hath ordeyned that a regne or a contree is suffisaunt to hym-self, thanne is it honeste and leueful that of habundaunce of this contree that men helpe another contree that is moore nedy; and therfore ther moote been marchantz to bryngen fro that o contree to that oother hire marchandises.

That oother marchandise, that men haunten with fraude and trecherie and deceite, with lesynges and false othes, is cursed and dampnable.

Espiritueel marchandise is proprely symonye, that is, ententif desir to byen thyng espiritueel, that is thyng that aperteneth to the seintuarie [19,025] of God, and to cure of the soule. This desir, if so be that a man do his diligence to parfournen it, al be it that his desir ne take noon effect, yet is it to hym a deedly synne, and if he be ordred² he is irreguleer. Certes symonye is cleped of Simon Magus, that wolde han boght for temporeel catel the gifte that God hadde geven by the Hooly Goost to Seint Peter and to the Apostles. And therfore understoond that bothe he that selleth and he that beyeth thynges espirituels been cleped

¹ Lawful. ² Practise. ³ Admitted to orders

symonyals, be it by catel, be it by procuryng, or by fleshly preyere of hise freendes, fleshly freendes, or espiritueel freendes. Fleshly in two maneres ; as by kynrede, or othere freendes ; soothly, if they praye for hym that is nat worthy and able it is symonye, if he take the benefice ; and if he be worthy and able ther nys noon.

That oother manere is whan a man or woman preyen for folk to avauncen hem oonly for wikked fleshly affeccoun that they have un-to [19,030] the persone, and that is foul symonye. But certes, in service for which men geveu thynges espirituels un-to hir servantz it moot been understonde that the service moot been honeste, and elles nat ; and eek that it be withouten bargaynyng, and that the persone be able ; for, as seith Seint Damasio,¹ “ Alle the synnes of the world at regard of this synne arn as thyng of noght, for it is the gretteste synne that may be, after the synne of Lucifer and Antecrist ; ” for by this synne God forleseth ² the chirche and the soule that he boghte with his precious blood by hem that geven chirches to hem that been nat digne, for they putten in theves that stelen the soules of Jhesu Crist and destroyen his patrimoyne. By swiche undigne ³ preestes and curates han lewed men the lasse reverence of the sacramentz of hooly chirche.

¹ Pope Damasus. ² Altogether loses. Unworthy.

and swiche geveres of chirches putten out the children of Crist, and putten in-to the chirche [19,035] the develes owene sone. They sellen the soules that lambes sholde kepen, to the wolf that strangleth hem; and therfore, shul they nevere han part of the pasture of lambes, that is the blisse of hevene.

Now comth hasardrie, with hise apurtenaunces, as tables¹ and rafles, of which comth deceite, false othes, chidynges, and alle ravynes, blasphemynge and reneiynge of God, and hate of hise neighebores, wast of goodes, mys-spendynge of tyme, and somtyme manslaughtre. Cértes, hasardours ne mowe nat been with-uten greet synne [whiles thei haunten that crafte²]. Of avarice comen eek lesynges, thefte, fals witnesse, and false othes; and ye shul understonde that thise been grete synnes, and expres agayn the comaundementz of God, as I have seyde. Fals witnesse is in word and eek in dede. In word, as for to bireve thy neighebores goode name by thy fals witnessyng, or bireven hym his catel or his heritage by thy fals witnessyng, whan thou for ire, or for meede, or for envye, berest fals witnesse, or accusest hym, or excusest hym, by thy fals wit [19,040] nesse, or elles excusest thy self falsly Ware yow questemongerers³ and notaries. Certes, for fals witnessyng was Susanna in fu

¹ Backgammon. ² Not in Elles. MS ³ Packers of juries.

gret sorwe and peyne, and many another mo. The synne of thefte is eek expres agayns Goddes heeste,¹ and in two maneres, corporeel or espiritueel. Corporeel, as for to take thy neighebores catel agayn his wyl, be it by force or by sleighte, be it by met² or by mesure, by stelyng eek of false enditementz upon hym, and in borwyng of thy neighebores catel, in entente nevere to payen it agayn, and semblable thynges.

Espiritueel thefte is sacrilege, that is to seyn, hurtyng of hooly thynges, or of thynges sacred to Crist, in two maneres ; by reson of the hooly [19,045] place, as chirches or chirche-hawes,³ for which every vileyns synne that men doon in swiche places may be cleped sacrilege, or every violence in the semblable places.

Also they that withdrawen falsly the rightes that longen to hooly chirche. And pleynly and generally, sacrilege is to reven hooly thyng fro hooly place, or unhooly thyng out of hooly place, or hooly thyng out of unhooly place.

Relevacio contra peccatum Avariciæ.

Now shul ye understonde that the releevyng of avarice is misericorde and pitee largely taken. And men myghten axe why that misericorde and pitee is releevyng of avarice. Cer-

¹ Command. ² Dole. ³ Churchyards.

tes, the avaricious man sheweth no pitee ne misericorde to the nedeful man, for he deliteth hym in the kepyng of his tresor and nat in the rescowynge ne releevynge of his evene Cristene ; and therfore speke I first of misericorde.

Thanne is misericorde, as seith the philosopre, a vertu by which the corage¹ of man is stired by the myse of hym that is mysessed ; [19,050] up-on which misericorde folweth pitee in parfournynge of charitable werkes of misericorde. And certes, thise thynges moeven a man to misericorde, of Jhesu Crist, that he gaf hym self for oure gilt, and suffred deeth for misericorde, and forgaf us oure originale synnes, and therby relessed us fro the peynes of helle, and amenused² the peynes of purgatorie by penitence, and geveth grace wel to do, and atteaste the blisse of hevene. The spes of misericorde been, as for to lene³ and for to geve, and to forgeven and relesse, and for to hanpitee in herte, and compassioun of the meschief of his evene Cristene, and eek to chastise there as nede is.

Another manere of remedie agayns avarice is resonable largesse, but soothly heere bihoveth the consideracioun of the grace of Jhesu Crist and of hise temporeel goodes, and eek of the goodes perdurables⁴ that Crist gaf to us

¹ Spirit. ² Diminished. ³ Lend. ⁴ Everlasting.

[19,055] and to han remembrance of the deeth that he shal receyve, he noot whanne, where, ne how; and eek that he shal forgon al that he hath, save oonly that he hath despended in goode werkes.

But, for as muche as som folk been unmesurable, men oughten eschue fool largesse that men clepen wast. Certes, he that is fool large¹ ne geveth nat his catel, but he leseth his catel. Soothly what thyng that he geveth for veyne glorie, as to mynstrals and to folk, for to beren his renoun in the world, he hath synne ther-of, and noon almesse. Certes he leseth foule his good that ne seketh with the gifte of his good no thyng but synne. He is lyk to an hors that seketh rather to drynken drovy² or trouble water, than for to drynken water of the clere [19,060] welle. And for as muchel as they geven ther as they sholde nat geven, to hem aperteneth thilke malisoun that Crist shal geven at the day of doome to hem that shullen been dampned.

Sequitur de Gulâ.

After avarice comth glotonye, which is expressek agayn the comandement of God. Glotonye is unmesurable appetit to ete or to drynke, or elles to doon ynogh to the unmesurable appetit and desordeyne³ coveitise to eten or to drynke.

¹ Foolishly generous ² Roiled ³ Inordinate

This synne corrupted al this world, as is wel shewed in the synne of Adam and of Eve. Looke, eek, what seith Seint Paul of glotonye. "Manye," seith Seint Paul, "goon of whiche I have ofte seyde to yow, and now I seye it wepyng, that been the enemys of the croys of Crist, of whiche the ende is deeth, and of whiche hire wombe is hire God, and hire glorie in confusioun of hem that so devouren erthely thynges." He that is usaunt to this synne of glotonye he ne may no synne withstonde; he moot been in servage of alle vices, for it is the develes hoord¹ ther he hideth hym and resteth.

[19,065] This synne hath manye spes. The firste is dronkenesse, that is the horrible sepulture of mannes resoun, and therfore whan a man is dronken he hath lost his resoun, and this is deedly synne. But soothly, whan that a man is nat wont to strong drynke, and *peraventure* ne knoweth nat the strengthe of the drynke, or hath feblesse in his heed, or hath travailed, thurgh which he drynketh the moore, al be he sodeynly caught with drynke, it is no deedly synne, but venyal. The seconde spece of glotonye is, that the spirit of a man wexeth al trouble,² for dronkenesse bireveth hym the discrecioun of his wit. The thridde spece of glotonye is whan a man devoureth his mete and hath no rightful manere of etyng. The

¹ Lurking-place. ² Confused

fourth is, whan thurgh the grete habundaunce of his mete, the humours in his body been des- [19,070] tempred. The fifthe is forgetelnesse by to muchel drynkynge, for which somtyme a man forgeteth er the morwe what he dide at even, or on the nyght biforn.

In oother manere been distinct the speses of glotonye after Seint Gregoric. The firste is for to ete biforn tyme to ete ; the seconde is whan a man get hym to delicaat mete or drynke ; the thridde is whan men taken to muche over mesure ; the fourthe is curiositee¹ with greet entente to maken and apparailen his mete ; the fifthe is for to eten to gredily. Thise been the fyve fynGRES of the develes hand, by whiche he draweth folk to synne.

Remedium contra peccatum Gulæ.

Agayns glotonye is the remedie abstinence, as seith Galien ; but that holde I nat meritorie, if he do it oonly for the heele of his body. Seint Augustyn wole that abstinence be doon for vertu and with pacience. "Abstinence," [19,075] he seith, "is litel worth, but if a man have good wil ther-to, and but it be enforced oy pacience and by charitee, and that men doon it for Godes sake, and in hope to have the blisse of hevene."

¹ Over-scrupulousness.

The felawes of abstinence been attemper-
 aunce, that holdeth the meene in alle thynges ;
 eek shame, that eschueth alle deshonestee ;¹
 suffisance, that seketh no riche metes ne
 drynkes, ne dooth no fors of to outrageous
 apparailynge of mete ; mesure also, that re-
 streyneth by resoun the deslavee² appetit of
 etynge ; sobrenesse also, that restreyneth the
 outrage of drynke ; sparynge also, that restreyn-
 eth the delicaat ese to sitte longe at his mete
 and softely, wherfore som folk stonden, of hir
 owene wyl, to eten at the lasse leyser.

Sequitur de Luxuria.

After glotonye thanne comth lecherie, for
 thise two synnes been so ny cosyns, that ofte
 [19,080] tyme they wol nat departe.³ God woot
 this synne is ful displesaunt thyng to God, for
 he seyde hymself, " Do no lecherie ;" and ther-
 fore he putte grete peynes agayns this synne
 in the olde lawe. If womman thral were taken
 in this synne, she sholde be beten with staves
 to the deeth ; and if she were a gentil wom-
 man, she sholde be slayn with stones ; and if
 she were a bisshoppes doghter, she sholde been
 brent by Goddes comandement. Forther-over,
 by the synne of lecherie God dreyn⁴te al the
 world at the diluge, and after that he brente

¹ Impropiety. ² Libertine. ³ Separate. ⁴ Drowned.

five citees with thonder leyt¹ and sank hem in-to helle.

Now lat us speke thanne of thilke stynkyng synne of lecherie that men clepe avowtrie² of wedded folk ; that is to seyn, if that oon of hem be wedded, or elles bothe. Seint John seith that avowtiers shullen been in helle in a stank brennyng of fyr and of brymston. [In fyr for lecherie, in brymston³] for the stynk of hire [19,085] ordure. Certes, the brekyng of this sacrament⁴ is an horrible thyng ; it was maked of God hym-self in paradys, and confermed by Jhesu Crist, as witnesseth Seint Mathew in the gospel : “ A man shal lete⁵ fader and mooder and taken hym to his wif, and they shullen be two in o flessch.” This sacrament bitokneth the knyttyng togidre of Crist and of hooly chirche. And nat oonly that God forbad avowtrie in dede, but eek he comanded that thou sholdest nat coveite thy neighebores wyf. In this heeste,⁶ seith Seint Augustyn, is forboden alle manere coveitise to doon lecherie. Lo, what seith Seint Mathew in the gospel ; that who so seeth a womman to coveitise of his lust, he hath doon lecherie with hire in his herte. Heere may ye seen that nat oonly the dede of this synne is forboden, but eek the desir to doon that synne.

¹ Lightning. ² Adultery. ³ Not in Elles. MS. ⁴ Of matrimony Leave. ⁵ Command.

[19,090] This cursed synne anoyeth¹ grevousliche hem that it haunten. And first to hire soule, for he obligeth it to synne and to peyne of deeth that is perdurable. Un-to the body anoyeth it grevously also, for it dreyeth hym, and wasteth, and shenteth² hym, and of his blood he maketh sacrifice to the feend of helle ; it wasteth his catel and his substaunce. And certes if it be a foul thyng a man to waste his catel on wommen, yet is it a fouler thyng whan that for swich ordure wommen dispenden up-on men hir catel and substaunce. This synne, as seith the prophete, bireveth man and womman hir goode fame, and al hire honour, and it is ful plesaunt to the devel ; for ther-by wynneth he the mooste partie of this world ; and, right as a marchant deliteth hym moost in chaffare that he hath moost advantage of right, so deliteth the fend in this ordure.

[19,095] This is that oother hand of the devel with five fynGRES to cacche the peple to his vileynye. The firste fynger is the fool lookynge of the fool womman, and of the fool man, that sleeth right as the basilicok³ sleeth folk by the venym of his sighte ; for the coveitise of eyen folweth the coveitise of the herte. The seconde fynger is the vileyns⁴ touchynge in wikkede manere ; and ther-fore, seith Salomon **that** who-so toucheth and handleth a womman

¹ Hurteth. ² Ruineth. ³ Basilisk. ⁴ Improper.

he fareth lyk hym that handleth the scorioun that styngeth and sodeynly sleeth thurgh his envenymynge ; as who-so toucheth warm pych, it shent hise fyngres. The thridde is foule wordes, that fareth lyk fyr, that right anon brenneth the herte. The fourthe fynger is the kysynge ; and trewely he were a greet fool that wolde kisse the mouth of a brennyng ovne, [19,100] or of a fourneys. And moore fooles been they that kissen in vileynye, for that mouth is the mouth of helle ; and namely¹ thise olde dotardes holours,² yet wol they kisse though they may nat do, and smatre³ hem. Certes, they been lyk to houndes, for an hound whan he comth by the roser,⁴ or by othere beauties, though he may nat pisse, yet wole he heve up his leg and make a contenaunce to pisse. And for that many man weneth that he may nat synne, for no likerousnesse that he dooth with his wyf, certes, that opinioun is fals ; God woot a man may sleen hym-self with his owene knyf⁵ and make hym-selven dronken of his owene tonne. Certes, be it wyf, be it child, or any worldly thyng that he loveth biforn God, it is his mawmet, and he is an ydolastre. Man sholde loven his wyf by discrecioun, patiently and atemprely, and thanne is she as though it were his suster.

¹ Especially. ² Driveling rakes. ³ Slightly taste. ⁴ Rose-bush.

⁵ The opposite opinion had been uttered by January, in the *Merchant's Tale*. Cf. l. 14, 176.

[19 105] The fifthe fynger of the develes hand is the stynkyng dede of leccherie. Certes, the five fyngres of glotonie the feend put in the wombe of a man, and with hise five fyngres of lecherie he gripeth hym by the reynes for to throwen hym in-to the fourneys of helle, ther as they shul han the fyr and the wormes that evere shul lasten, and wepyng and wailynge, sharpe hunger and thurst, and grymnesse of develes that shullen al to-trede hem with-outen respit and with-outen ende.

Of leccherie, as I seyde, sourden¹ diverse spes, as fornicacioun that is bitwixe man and womman that been nat married, and this is deedly synne and agayns nature. Al that is aemy and destruccioun to nature is agayns nature. *Parfay*, the resoun of a man telleth eek hym wel that it is deedly synne, for as muche as God forbad leccherie. And Seint Paul geveth hem the regne² that nys dewe to no wight but to hem that doon deedly synne. Another synne of leccherie is to bireve a mayden of hir maydenhede,³ for he that so dooth, certes, he casteth a mayden out of the hyeste degree that is in this present lif, and siveveth hire thilke precious fruyt that the book clepeth the "hundred fruyt." I ne kan seye it noon oother weyes in Englissh, but in Latyn it highte *Centesimus fructus*. Certes, he that so

¹ Arise. ² Kingdom. ³ Maidenhood.

dooth is cause of manye damages and vileynyes mo than any man kan rekene, right as he somtyme is cause of alle damages that beestes don in the feeld that breketh the hegge or the closure, thurgh which he destroyeth that may nat been restooored. For certes, namoore may maydenhede be restooored than an arm that is smyten fro the body may retourne agayn to [19,115] wexe. She may have mercy ; this woot I wel, if she do penitence, but nevere shal it be that she nas corrupt.

And, al be it so that I have spoken somewhat of avowtrie, it is good to shewen mo perils that longen to avowtrie, for to eschue that foule synne. Avowtrie in Latyn is for to seyn, approchyng of oother mannes bed, thurgh which tho that whilom weren o flessch abawndone hir bodyes to othere persones. Of this synne, as seith the wise man, folwen manye harmes. First, brekyng of feith ; and certes, in feith is the keye of Cristendom, and whan that feith is broken and lorn, soothly, Cristendom stant [19,120] veyn and with-uten fruyt. This synne is eek a thefte, for thefte generally is for to reve a wight his thyng agayns his wille. Certes this is the fouleste thefte that may be, whan a womman steleth hir body from hir housbonde and geveth it to hire holour to defoulen hire, and steleth hir soule fro Crist, and geveth it to the devel. This is a fouler thefte

than for to breke a chirche and stele the chal-ice, for thise avowtiers breken the temple of God, spiritually, and stelen the vessel of grace, that is the body and the soule, for which Crist shal destroyen hem, as seith Seint Paul.

Soothly of this thefte douted¹ gretly Joseph whan that his lordes wyf preyed hym of viley-nye, whan he seyde, "Lo, my lady, how my lord hath take to me under my warde al that he hath in this world, ne no thyng of hise thynges is out of my power, but oonly ye, that been his wyf, and how sholde I thanne do this wikked-nesse and synne so horrible agayns God, and agayns my lord? God it forbeede!" Allas! al to litel is swich trouthe now y-founde.

[19,125] The thridde harm is the filthe thurgh which they breken the comandement of God and defoulen the auctour of matrimoyne, that is, Crist. For certes, in so muche as the sacrament of mariage is so noble and so digne,² so muche is it gretter synne for to breken it, for God made mariage in paradys, in the estaat of .nnocence, to multiplie man-kynde to the service of God; and therefore is the brekyng moore grevous; of which brekyng comen false heires ofte tyme, that wrongfully ocupien folkes heritages. And therefore wol Crist putte hem out of the regne³ of hevene that is heritage to goode folk. Of this brekyng comth eek ofte

¹ Feared. ² Worthy. ³ Kingdom.

tyme that folk unwar wedden or synnen with hire owene kynrede, and namely thilke harlottes that haunten bordels of thise fool wommen, that mowe be likned to a commune gonge,¹ where as men purgen hire ordure.

What seye we eek of putours² that lyven by the horrible synne of putrie³ and constreyne wommen to yelden to hem a certeyn rente of hire bodily puterie, — ye, somtyme of his owene wyf or his child, as doon this bawdes. Certes, [19,130] thise been cursede synnes. Understood eek, that avowtrie is set glad⁴, in the ten comandementz bitwixe thefte and manslaughter, for it is the gretteste thefte that may be, for it is thefte of body and of soule; and it is lyk to homycide, for it kerveth atwo and breketh atwo hem that first were maked of flessch, and therfore by the olde lawe of God they sholde be slayn. But natheles, by the lawe of Jhesu Crist, that is lawe of pitee, whan he seyde to the womman that was founden in avowtrie and sholde han been slayn with stones after the wyl of the Jewes as was hir⁵ lawe, "Go," quod Jhesu Crist, "and have namoore wyl to synne," or wille namoore to do synne. Soothly, the vengeaunce of avowtrie is awarded to the peynes of helle, but if so be that it be destourbed by penitence.

Yet been ther mo speces of this cursede synne,

¹ Jakes (gang-house). ² Pimps. ³ Bawdry. ⁴ Fitly. ⁵ Their

as whan that oon of hem is religious,¹ or elles bothe, or of folk that been entred in-to ordre, as subdekne, or preest, or hospitaliers, and evere the hyer that he is in ordre the gretter is [19,135] the synne. The thynges that gretly agreggen² hire synne is the brekyng of hire avow of chastitee whan they receyved the ordre. And forther-over, sooth is, that hooly ordre is chief of al the tresorie of God, and his especial signe and mark of chastitee, to shewe that they been joyned to chastitee which that is moost precious lyf that is. And thise ordred folk³ been specially titled⁴ to God, and of the special meignee⁵ of God, for which, whan they doon deedly synne, they been the special traytours of God and of his peple, for they lyven of the peple [to preye for the peple, and while they been suche traytours her preyers availle nat to the peple⁶].

Preestes been aungeles as by the dignitee of hir mysterye, but for-sothe Seint Paul seith, that Sathanas transformeth hym in an aungel of light. Soothly, the preest that haunteth deedly synne, he may be likned to the aungel of derknesse transformed in the aungel of light; he semeth aungel of light, but for-sothe he is aungel of derknesse. [19,140] Swiche preestes been the sones of Helie, as sheweth in the book

¹ In a religious order. ² Aggravate. ³ Folk in orders. ⁴ Called Retinues. ⁵ Not in Elles. MS.

of Kynges, that they weren the sones of Belial, that is the devel. “Belial ” is to seyn with-outen juge, and so faren they; hem thynketh they been free and han no juge, namoore than hath a free bole, that taketh which cow that hym liketh in the town. So faren they by wommen, for right as a free bole is ynough for al a toun, right so is a wikked preest corrupcion ynough for al a parisshe, or for al a contree.

Thise preestes, as seith the book, ne konne nat the mysterie of preesthode to the peple, ne God, ne knowe they nat they ne holde hem nat apayd,¹ as seith the book, of soden flessch that was to hem offred, but they tooke by force the flessch that is rawe. Certes, so thise shrewes² ne holden hem nat apayed of roosted flessch and sode flessch with which the peple fedden hem in greet reverence, but they wole have raw flessch [19,145] of folkes wyves and hir doghtres. And certes, thise wommen that consenten to hire harlotrie doon greet wrong to Crist and to hooly chirche and alle halwes,³ and to alle soules; for they bireven⁴ alle thise hym that sholde worshipe Crist and hooly chirche, and preye for cristene soules. And therfore han swiche preestes, and hire lemmanes eek that consenten to hir leccherie, the malisoun⁵ of al the court cristiene, ti’ they come to amende-ment.

¹ Satisfied. ² Rascals. ³ Saints. ⁴ Take from. ⁵ Malediction

The thridde spece of avowtrie is som tyme bitwixe a man and his wyf ; and that is whan they take no reward¹ in hire assemblynge but oonly to hire fleshly delit, as seith Seint Jerome ; and ne rekken of no thyng but that they been assembled. By-cause that they been married al is good ynough, as thynketh to hem. But in swich folk hath the devel power, as seyde the aungel Raphael to Thobie, for in hire assemblynge they putten Jhesu Crist out of hire herte, and geven hem-self to alle ordure.

[19,150] The fourthe spece is the assemblee of hem that been of hire kynrede, or of hem that been of oon affynytee, or elles with hem with whiche hir fadres or hir kynrede han deled in the synne of lecherie. This synne maketh hem lyk to houndes that taken no kepe to kynrede. And certes, parentele² is in two maneres, outhir goostly or fleshly : goostly, as for to deelen with hise godsibbes ;³ for, right so as he that engendreth a child is his fleshly fader, right so is his godfader his fader espiritueel ; for which a womman may in no lasse synne assemblen with hire godsib than with hire owene fleshly brother.

The fifthe spece is thilke abhomynable synne of which that no man unnethe oghte speke ne write, nathelees it is openly reherced in holy writ. This cursednesse doon men and wom-

¹ Regard. ² Kinship. ³ Sib, kin ; *god-sib*, spiritual kin

men in diverse entente, and in diverse manere, but though that hooly writ speke of horrible synne, certes hooly writ may nat been defouled, namoore than the sonne that shyneth on the mixne.¹

[19,155] Another synne aperteneth to leccherie that comth in slepynge; and this synne cometh ofte to hem that been maydenes, and eek to hem that been corrupt. And this synne men clepen polucioun, that comth in thre maneres. Somtyme of langwissynge of body, for the humours been to ranke and habundaunt in the body of man; somtyme of infermetee, for the fieblesse of the vertu retentif, as phisik maketh mencion; somtyme for surfeet of mete and drynke; and somtyme of vileyns² thoghtes that been enclosed in mannes mynde whan he gooth to slepe, which may nat been withoute synne, for which men moste kepen hem wisely, or elles may men synnen ful greuously.

Remedium contra peccatum Luxuriæ.

Now comth the remedie agayns leccherie, and that is generally chastitee and continence, that restreyneth alle the desordeyned³ moevynges that comen of flesshly talentes.⁴ And evere the gretter merite shal he han that moost restreyneth the wikkede eschawfynges of the

Dunghill. ² Improper. ³ Inordinate. ⁴ Desires.

ordure¹ of this synne ; and this is in two man-
 eres ; that is to seyn, chastitee in mariage, and
 [19,160] chastitee of widwehode. Now shaltow
 understonde that matrimoyne is leefful² assem-
 blynge of man and of womman, that receyven,
 by vertu of the sacrement, the boond thurgh
 which they may nat be departed³ in al hir lyf,
 that is to seyn, whil that they lyven bothe.
 This, as seith the book, is a ful greet sacre-
 ment ; God makid it, as I have seyde, in para-
 dys, and wolde hym-self be born in mariage ;
 and, for to halwen mariage, he was at a wed-
 dyng, where as he turned water in to wyn,
 which was the firste miracle that he wroghte in
 erthe biforn hise disciples.

Trewe effect of mariage clenseth fornica-
 cioun and replenysseth hooly chirche of good
 lynage, for that is the ende of mariage ; and it
 chaungeth deedly synne in to venial synne bi-
 twixe hem that been ywedded, and maketh the
 hertes al oon of hem that been ywedded, as
 wel as the bodies. Verray mariage that was
 establissed by God, er that synne bigan, whan
 natureel lawe was in his right poynt⁴ in para-
 dys, and it was ordeyned that o man sholde
 have but o womman, and o womman but o
 man, as seith Seint Augustyn, by manye re-
 souns.

[19,165] First, for mariage is figured bitwixe

¹ Filth. ² Lawful. ³ Separated. ⁴ Perfect operation.

Crist and holy chirche, and that oother is, for a man is heved ¹ of a womman, — algate by ordinaunce it sholde be so. For, if a womman hadde mo men than oon, thanne sholde she have moo hevedes than oon, and that were an horrible thyng biforn God ; and eek a womman ne myghte nat plese to many folk at oones. And also ther ne sholde nevere be pees ne reste amonges hem, for everich wolde axen his owene thyng ; and forther-over no man ne sholde knowe his owene engendrure, ne who sholde have his heritage, and the womman sholde been the lasse biloved fro the tyme that she were conjoynt to many men.

Now comth how that a man sholde bere hym with his wif ; and namely ² in two thynges, that is to seyn, in suffraunce and reverence, as shewed Crist whan he made first womman. For he ne made hire nat of the heved of Adam, for she sholde nat clayme to greet lordshipe ; [19,170] for ther as the womman hath the maistrie she maketh to mucche desray.³ Ther neden none ensamples of this, the experience of day by day oghte suffise. Also certes, God ne made nat womman of the foot of Adam, for she ne sholde nat been holden to lowe, for she can nat paciently suffre. But God made womman of the ryb of Adam. for womman sholde be felawe un-to man. Man sholde bere hym to

¹ Head. ² Especially. ³ Disorder.

his wyf in feith, in trouthe, and in love, as seith Seint Paul, that a man sholde loven his wyf as Crist loved hooly chirche, that loved it so wel that he deyde for it ; so sholde a man for his wyf if it were nede.

Now how that a womman sholde be subget to hire housbonde, that telleth Seint Peter. First, in obedience. And eek, as seith the decree, a womman that is wyf, as longe as she is a wyf, she hath noon auctoritee to swere, ne bere witnesse, with-oute leve of hir housbonde, that is hire lord, algate he sholde be so by [19,175] resoun. She sholde eek serven hym in alle honestee, and been attempre of hire array. I woot wel that they sholde setten hire entente to plesen hir housbondes, but nat by hire queyntise of array. Seint Jerome seith that wyves that been apparailled in silk and in precious purple ne mowe nat clothen hem in Jhesu Crist. What seith Seint John eek in thys matere ? Seint Gregorie eek seith that no wight seketh precious array, but oonly for veyne glorie to beer. honoured the moore bi-forn the peple. It is a greet folye, a womman to have a fair array outward and in hir-self foul inward.

A wyf sholde eek be mesurable in lookyng and in berynge, and in lawghyng, and discreet [19,180] in alle hire wordes and hire dedes and aboven alle worldly thyng she sholde lover

hire housbonde with al hire herte, and to hym be trewe of hir body. So sholde an housbonde eek be to his wyf, for, sith that al the body is the housbondes, so sholde hire herte been, or elles ther is bitwixe hem two, as in that, no parfit mariage.

Thanne shal men understonde that for thre thynges a man and his wyf fleshly mowen assemble. The firste is in entente of engendrure of children, to the service of God, for certes, that is the cause final of matrimoyne. Another cause is to yelden everich of hem to oother the dette of hire bodies, for neither of hem hath power over his owene body. The thridde is for to eschewe leccherye and vileynye. The ferthe is for-sothe deedly synne. As to the firste, it is meritorie; the seconde also, for, as seith the decree, that she hath merite of chastitee that yeldeth to hire housbonde the dette of hir body, ye, though it be agayn hir likynge and [19,185] the lust of hire herte. The thridde manere is venyal synne, and trewely scarsly may ther any of thise be with-oute venial synne, for the corrupcioun and for the delit. The fourthe manere is for to understonde if they assemble oonly for amorous love, and for noon of the foreseyde causes, but for to accomplice thilke brennyng delit, they rekke nevere how afte, soothly it is deedly synne, and yet with sorwe somme folk wol peynen hem moore to doon than to hire appetit suffiseth.

The seconde manere of chastitee is for to been a clene wydewe and eschue the embracynges of man and desiren the embracynge of Jhesu Crist. Thise been tho that han been wyves and han forgoon¹ hire housbondes, and eek wommen that han doon leccherie and been releved by penitence. And certes, if that a wyf koude kepen hire al chaast by licence of hir housbonde so that she geve nevere noon occasion that he agilte,² it were to hire a greet [19,190] merite. Thise manere wommen that observen chastitee [moste be clene in herte, as wele as in body and in thoughte, and mesurable³] in clothynge and in contenance, and been abstinent in etynge and drynkynge, in spekyng and in dede. They been the vessel, or the boyste⁴ of the blissed Magdelene that fulfilleth hooly chirche of good odour.

The thridde manere of chastitee is virginitee and it bihoveth that she be hooly in herte, and clene⁵ of body; thanne is she spouse to Jhesu Crist, and she is the lyf of angeles. She is the preisyng of this world, and she is as thise martirs in egalitee. She hath in hire that tonge may nat telle, ne herte thynke. Virginitee baar oure Lord Jhesu Crist, and virgine was hymselfe.

Another remedie agayns leccherie is specially to withdrawen swiche thynges as geve occasion to thilke vileynye, as ese, etynge and drynk

¹ Lost. ² Trespassed. ³ Not in Elles. MS. ⁴ Box. ⁵ Pure.

ynge ; for certes, whan the pot boyleth strongly the beste remedie is to withdrawe the fyr. [19,195] Slepyng longe in greet quite is eek a greet norice to leccherie.

Another remedie agayns leccherie is that a man or a womman eschue the compaignye of hem by whiche he douteth¹ to be tempted, for al be it so that the dede is withstonden, yet is ther greet temptacioun. Soothly, a whit wal, al-though it ne brenne noght fully by stikyng of a candeale, yet is the wal blak of the leyt. Ful ofte tyme I rede, that no man truste in his owene perfeccioun but he be stronger than Sampson, and hoolier than Danyel, and wiser than Salomon.

Now after that I have declared yow as I kan the sevene deedly synnes, and somme of hire braunches and hire remedies, soothly, if I koude, I wolde telle yow the ten comande- [19,200] mentz ; but so heigh a doctrine I lete to divines ;² nathelees I hope to God they been touched in this tretice³ everich of hem alle.

Sequitur secunda pars Penitencie.

Now, for as muche as the seconde partie of penitence stant in confessioun of mouth, as I

¹ Feareth. ² It seems that here Chaucer speaks for himself rather than for the Parson, who was "a lerned man, a clerk" (l. 480). Cf. l. 18,300, 19,286. ³ This reference to the Parson's Tale as a "treafise," and the mention of "chapters" in it, seem to stamp it as a translation or adaptation by Chaucer of the work of some one else.

bigan in the firste chapitre,¹ I seye, Seint Augustyn seith, "Synne is every word and every dede, and al that men coveiten agayn the lawe of Jhesu Crist; and this is for to synne in herte, in mouth, and in dede, by thy five wittes, that been sighte, herynge, smellynge, tastynge or savourynge, and feelynge."

Now is it good to understonde [the circumstaunces²] that agreggeth³ muchel every synne. Thow shalt considere what thow art that doost: the synne; wheither thou be male or femele, yong or oold, gentil or thral, free or servant hool or syk, wedded or sengle, ordred or un-[19,205] ordred, wys or fool, clerk or seculeer; if she be of thy kynrede bodily or goostly, or noon; if any of thy kynrede have synned with hire or noon, and manye mo thinges.

Another circumstaunce is this, wheither it be doon in fornicacioun or in avowtrie or noon, incest or noon, mayden or noon, in manere of homicide or noon, horrible grete synnes or smale, and how longe thou hast continued in synne. The thridde circumstaunce is the place ther thou hast do synne, wheither in oother mennes hous or in thyn owene, in feeld or in chirche or in chirchewawe,⁴ in chirche dedicaat or noon; for if the chirche be halwed and man or womman spille his kynde in with that place by wey of

¹ This is a continuation of the discussion dropped at 18,629. ² No
³ Elles. MS., which reads "understonde that that agreggeth.
 Aggravateth. Cf. 18,593. ⁴ Churchyard

synne or by wikked temptacioun the chirche is entredited¹ [til it be reconciled by the bysshope²]; and the preest that dide swich a vil-eynye, to terme of al his lif he sholde namoore synge masse, and if he dide he sholde doon deedly synne at every time that he so songe [19,210] masse. The fourthe circumstaunce is, by whiche mediatours or by whiche messagers, as for enticement or for consentement to bere compaignye with felaweshipe, — for many a wrecche for to bere compaignye shal go to the devel of helle, — wherfore they that eggen³ or consenten to the synne been parteners of the synne and of the temptacioun of the synnere.

The fifthe circumstance is, how manye tymes that he hath synned if it be in his mynde, and how ofte that he hath falle; for he that ofte falleth in synne he despiseth the mercy of God and encreeseth hys synne, and is unkynde to Crist, and he wexeth the moore fieble to withstonde synne and synneth the moore lightly.⁴ And the latter ariseth, and is the moore eschew⁵ for to shryven hym, namely⁶ to hym that is his [19,215] confessour; for which that folk whan they falle agayn in hir olde folies, outhur they forleten hir olde confessours al outrely, or elles they departen⁷ hir shrift in diverse places, but

¹ Interdicted. ² Not in Elles MS. ³ Incite. ⁴ Easily. ⁵ Averse Especially. ⁷ Divide.

soothly swich departed shrift deserveth no mercy of God of hise synnes. The sixte circumstance is, why that a man synneth as by temptacioun and if hym-self procure thilke temptacioun, or by the excitynge of oother folke ; or if he synne with a womman by force, or by hire owene assent, or if the womman maugree hir hed hath been afforced or noon ; this shal she telle, for coveitise, or for poverte, and if it was hire procurynge or noon, and swiche manere harneys.¹

The seventh circumstance is, in what manere he hath doon his synne, or how that she hath suffred that folk han doon to hire, and the same shal the man telle pleynty² with alle circumstances, and wheither he hath synned with [19,220] comune bordel wommen or noon, or doon his synne in hooly tymes or noon, in fastyng tymes or noon, or biforn his shrifte, or after his latter shrifte, and hath *peraventure* broken therfore his penance enjoyned ; by whos helpe and whos conseil, by sorcerie or craft, — al moste be toold. Alle thise thynges after that they been grete or smale engreggen³ the conscience of man. And eek the preest, that is thy juge, may the bettre been avysed of his juggement in gevynge of thy penaunce, and that is after thy contricioun. For understonde wel that after tyme that a man hath de

¹ Phases of the subject. ² Fully. ³ Aggravate

ouled his baptesme by synne, if he wole come to salvacioun, ther is noon other wey but by penitence, and shrifte, and satisfaccioun ; and namely by the two, if ther be a confessour to which he may shriven hym, and the thridde, if he have lyf to parfournen it.

[19,225] Thanne shal man looke and considere that if he wole maken a trewe and a profitable confessioun ther moste be foure condiciouns. First, it moot been in sorweful bitterness of herte, as seyde the kyng Ezechiel ¹ to God, "I wol remembre me alle the yeres of my lif in bitterness of myn herte." This condicioun of bitterness hath fyve signes. The firste is, that confessioun moste be shamefast, nat for to covere ne hyden his synne, for he hath agilt ² his God and defouled his soule ; and ther-of seith Seint Augustyn, "The herte travailleth for shame of his synne, and for he hath greet shamefastnesse he is digne to have greet mercy of God." Swich was the confessioun of the puprican that wolde nat heven up hise eyen to hevene for he hadde offended God of hevene ; for which shamefastnesse he hadde anon the [19,230] mercy of God. And ther-of seith Seint Augustyn that swich shamefast folk been next forgevenesse and remissioun.

Another signe is humylitee in confessioun of which seith Seint Peter, "Humbleth yow

¹ Ezechias or Hezekiah. ² Sinned against

under the myght of God." The hond of God is myghty in confessioun, for ther-by God forgeveth thee thy synnes, for he allone hath the power. And this humylitee shal been in herte and in signe outward ; for right as he hath humylitee to God in his herte ; right so sholde he humble his body outward to the preest that sit in Goddes place. For which in no manere, sith that Crist is sovereyn and the preest meene and mediatour bitwixe Crist and the synnere, and the synnere is the laste by wey of resoun, thanne sholde nat the synnere sitte as heighe as his confessour, but knele biforn hym or at his feet, but if maladie destourbe it ; for he shal nat taken kepe, who sit there, but in whos [19,235] place that he sitteth. A man that hath trespassed to a lord and comth for axe mercy and maken his accord and set him doun anon by the lord, men wolde holden hym outrageous and nat worthy so soone for to have remissioun ne mercy.

The thridde signe is, how that thy shrift sholde be ful of teeris, if man may ; and if man may nat wepe with hise bodily eyen, lat hym wepe in herte. Swich was the confessioun of Seint Peter, for after that he hadde forsake Jhesu Crist he wente out and weepe ful bitterly. The fourthe signe is, that he ne lette nat for shame to shewen his confessioun ; swich was the confessioun of the Magdelene, that ne

spared for no shame of hem that weren atte feeste for to go to oure Lord Jhesu Crist and bi-
[19,240] knowe¹ to hym hire synnes. The fifthe signe is, that a man or a womman be obeisant to receyven the penaunce that hym is enjoyned for hise synnes, for certes, Jhesu Crist for the giltes of a man was obedient to the deeth.

The seconde condicion of verray confession is that it be hastily² doon ; for certes, if a man hadde a deedly wounde, evere the lenger that he taried to warisshe³ hym-self the moore wolde it corrupte and haste hym to his deeth, and eek the wounde wolde be the wors for to heele ; and right so fareth synne that longe tyme is in a man unshewed.

Certes a man oghte hastily shewen hise synnes for manye causes ; as for drede of deeth that cometh ofte sodenly, and no certeyn what tyme it shal be, ne in what place ; and eek the drecchyng⁴ of o synne draweth in another ; and eek the lenger that he tarieth the ferther he is fro Crist. And if he abide to his laste day scarsly may he shryven hym, or remembre hym of hise synnes, or repenten hym for the grev-
[19,245] ous maladie of hise deeth. And for as muche as he ne hath nat in his lyf herkned Jhesu Crist whanne he hath spoken, he shal trie to Jhesu Crist at his laste day and scarsly wol he herkne hym.

¹ Acknowledge. ² Promptly. ³ Cure. ⁴ Delay.

And understond that this condicioun moste han foure thynges. Thi shrift moste be purveyed¹ bifore and avysed, for wikked haste dooth no profit; and that a man konne shryve hym of hise synnes, be it of pride, or of envye, and so forth, of the speses and circumstances; and that he have comprehended in hys mynde the nombre and the greetnesse of hise synnes, and how longe that he hath leyn in synne; and eek that he be contrit of hise synnes, and in stidefast purpos, by the grace of God, nevere eft² to falle in synne; and eek that he drede and countrewaite³ hym-self that he fle the occasiouns of synne to whiche he is enclyned.

Also thou shalt shryve thee of alle thy synnes to o man, and nat a parcel to o man and a parcel to another; that is to understonde in entente to departe⁴ thy confessioun as for shame or drede, for it nys but stranglynge of thy soule. [19,250] For certes Jhesu Crist is entierly al good; in hym nys noon inperfeccioun, and therfore outhur he forgeveth al parfitly, or never a deel. I seye nat that if thou be assigned to the penitauncer⁵ for certein synne that thou art bounde to shewen hym al the remenaunt of thy synnes of whiche thou hast be shryven to thy curaat,⁶ but if it like to thee of thyn humylitee; this is no departynge of shrifte. Ne I

¹ Provided for. ² After. ³ Watch against. ⁴ Part. ⁵ One who resolves difficult questions. ⁶ Cf. l. 12,137.

seye nat, ther as I speke of divisoun of confessioun, that if thou have licence for to shryve thee to a discreet and an honeste preest, where thee liketh and by licence of thy curaat, that thow ne mayst wel shryve thee to him of alle thy synnes ; but lat no blotte be bihynde, lat no synne been untoold, as fer as thow hast remembraunce. And whan thou shalt be shryven to thy curaat telle hym eek alle the synnes that thow hast doon syn thou were last yshryven ; this is no wikked entente of divisoun of shrifte.

[19,255] Also, the verray shrifte axeth certeine condiciouns. First, that thow shryve thee by thy free wil, noght constreyned, ne for shame of folk, ne for maladie, ne swiche thynges, for it is resoun that he that trespasseth by his free wyl, that by his free wyl he confesse his trespass ; and that noon oother man telle his synne but he hym self ; ne he shal nat nayte¹ ne denye his synne, ne wratthe hym agayn the preest for his amonestynge² to leve synne.

The seconde condicioun is, that thy shrift be laweful, that is to seyn that thow that shryvest thee, and eek the preest that hereth thy confessioun, been verrailly in the feith of hooly chirche, and that a man ne be nat despeired of the mercy of Jhesu Crist as Caym³ or Judas.

¹ "Nay." ² Admonishing. ³ Cain.

And eek a man moot accusen hym-self of his owene trespas, and nat another, but he shal blame and wyten hym-self and his owene malice of his synne and noon oother ; but nathelees if [19,260] that another man be occasioun or enticere of his synne, or the estaat of a persone be swich thurgh which his synne is aggregated,¹ or elles that he may nat pleynty² shryven hym but he telle the persone with which he hath synned, thanne may he telle ; so that his entente ne be nat to bakbite the persone but oonly to declaren his confessioun.

Thou ne shalt nat eek make no lesynges in thy confessioun for humylitee, *peraventure* to seyn that thou hast doon synnes of whiche that thou were nevere guilty. For Seint Augustyn seith, " If thou by cause of thyn humylitee makest lesynges on thy self, though thou ne were nat in synne biforn, yet artow thanne in synne thurgh thy lesynges." Thou most eek shewe thy synne by thyn owene propre mouth, but thou be woxe dowmb, and nat by no lettre, for thou that hast doon the synne thou shalt [19,265] have the shame therfore. Thou shalt nat eek peynte thy confessioun by faire subtile wordes, to covere the moore thy synne, for thanne bigilestow thy-self and nat the preest ; thou most tellen it pleynty, be it nevere so foul ne so horrible.

¹ Aggravated. ² Fully (Fr. *plein*).

Thow shalt eek shryve thee to a preest that is discreet to conseil, and eek thou shalt nat shryve thee for veyne glorie, ne for ypocrisye, ne for no cause, but oonly for the doute¹ of Jhesu Crist and the heele of thy soule. Thow shalt nat eek renne to the preest sodeynly to tellen hym lightly thy synne, as who so telleth a jape or a tale, but avysely, and with greet devocioun.

And, generally, shryve thee ofte. If thou ofte falle, ofte thou arise by confessioun, and though thou shryve thee ofter than ones of synne of which thou hast be shryven, it is the moore merite. And, as seith Seint Augustyn, thou shalt have the moore lightly relesyng and grace of God bothe of synne and of peyne. [19,270] And certes, oones a yeere atte leeste wey it is laweful for to been housled,² for certes, oones a yeere alle thynges renovellen.³

Now have I toolde you of verray confessioun, that is the seconde partie of penitence.

Sequitur tertia pars Penitenciæ.

The thridde partie of penitence is satisfacioun, and that stant moost generally in almesse,⁴ and in bodily peyne. Now been there thre manere of almesses : contricioun of herte, where a man offreth hymself to God ; another

¹ Fear. ² Go to the Eucharist. ³ Renew. ⁴ Alms

is to han pitee of defaute¹ of hise neighebores, and the thridde is in gevyng of good conseil, goostly and bodily, where men han nede, and namely² in sustenance of mannes foode. And tak kepe that a man hath nede of thise thinges generally, he hath nede of foode, he hath nede of clothyng and herberwe,³ he hath nede of charitable conseil and visityng in prisone and in maladie, and sepulture of his dede body. [19,275] And if thow mayst nat visite the nede-ful with thy persone, visite hym by thy message and by thy giftes. Thise been generally almesses or werkes of charitee of hem that han temporeel riches or discrecioun in conseilyng. Of thise werkes shaltow heren at the day of doome.

Thise almesses shaltow doon of thyne owene propre thynges, and hastily⁴ and prively if thow mayst; but nathelees if thow mayst nat doon it prively, thow shalt nat forbere to doon almesse though men seen it, so that it be nat doon for thank of the world, but oonly for thank of Jhesu Crist; for, as witnesseth Seint Mathew, *capitulo* v., "A citee may nat been hyd that is set on a montayne, ne men lighte nat a lanterne and put it under a busshel, but men sette it on a candlestikke to geve light to [19,280] the men in the hous; right so sha. youre light lighten bfore men, that they may

¹ Lack. ² Especially. ³ Lodging. ⁴ Promptly.

seen youre goode werkes and glorifie youre Fader that is in hevene."

Now as to speken of bodily peyne ; it stant in preyeres, in wakynges,¹ in fastynges, in vertuose techinges of orisouns.

And ye shul understonde that orisouns or preyeres is for to seyn a pitous² wyl of herte that redresseth³ it in God, and expresseth it by word outward to remoeven harmes, and to han thynges espiritueel and durable, and somtyme temporele thynges, of whiche orisouns, certes, in the orison of the *Pater noster* hath Jhesu Crist enclosed moost thynges. Certes, it is privy-legged of thre thynges in his dignytee,⁴ for which it is moore digne than any oother preyer : for that Jhesu Crist hym-self maked it ; and it is short, for it sholde be koud⁵ the moore lightly,⁶ and for to withholden it the moore esily in herte, and helpen hym self the ofter with the [19,285] orisoun, and for a man sholde be the lasse wery to seyen it, and for a man may nat excusen hym to lerne it, it is so short and so esy ; and for it comprehendeth in itself alle goode preyeres.

The expositioun of this hooly preyer that is so excellent and digne, I bitake⁷ to thise maistres of theologie⁸ save thus muchel wol I seyn, that whan thou prayest that God sholde

¹ Watchings. ² Merciful. ³ Reformeth. ⁴ Worth. ⁵ Known Easily. ⁶ Assign. ⁷ Cf. ll. 18,300, 19,200.

forgeve thee thy giltes as thou forgevest hem that agilten to thee, be ful wel war that thou be nat out of charitee. This hooly orisoun amenuseth¹ eek venyal synne, and therfore it aperteneth specially to penitence.

This preyere moste be trewely seyð, and in verray² feith, and that men preye to God ordynatly and discretly and devoutly, and alwey a man shal putten his wyl to be subget to the wille of God. This orisoun moste eek been seyð with greet humblesse and ful pure honesty, and nat to the anoyaunce of any man or womman. It moste eek been continued with the werkes [19,290] of charitee. It avayleth eek agayn the vices of the soule, for, as seith Seint Jerome, "By fastynge been saved the vices of the flesh, and by preyere the vertues of the soule."

After this thou shalt understonde that bodily peyne stant in wakyng;³ for Jhesu Crist seith, "Waketh and preyeth that ye ne entre in wikked temptacioun." Ye shul understanden also, that fastynge stant in thre hynges: in forberyng of bodily mete and drynke, and in forberyng of worldly jolitee, and in forberyng of deedly synne, this is to seyn, that a man shal kepen hym fro deedly synne with al his myght.

And thou shalt understanden eek that God ordeyned fastynge; and to fastynge appertenen

¹ Diminisheth. ² True. ³ Watching

four things : largenesse to povre folk, gladnesse of herte spiritueel, nat to been angry ne anoyed ne grucche for he fasteth, and also resonable houre for to ete by mesure, that is for to seyn, a man shal nat ete in untyme,¹ ne sitte the lenger at his table to ete for he fasteth.

[19,295] Thanne shaltow understonde that bodily peyne stant in disciplyne or techynge by word and by writynge or in ensample ; also in werynge of heyres,² or of stamyn,³ or of haubergeons⁴ on hire naked flessch, for Cristes sake, and swiche manere penaunces. But war thee wel that swiche manere penaunces on thy flessch ne make thee nat or angry or anoyed of thy self ; for bettre is to caste away thyn heyre, than for to caste away the sikernes⁵ of Jhesu Crist. And therfore seith Seint Paul, "Clothe yow, as they that been chosen of God, in herte, of misericorde, debonairetee, suffraunce," and swiche manere of clothyng, of whiche Jhesu Crist is moore apayed⁶ than of heyres or hauberkes.

Thanne is discipline eek in knokkyng of thy brest, in scourgyng with yerdes,⁷ in knelynges, in tribulacions, in suffryng paciently wronges that been doon to thee, and eek in pacient suffraunce of maladies, or lesyng of

¹ Unseasonable hours. ² Hair shirts. ³ Wooller cloth. ⁴ Coats of mail. ⁵ Sureness. ⁶ Satisfied. ⁷ Rods.

worldly catel, or of wyf, or of child, or othere freendes.

[19,300] Thanne shaltow understonde whiche thynges destourben penaunce ;¹ and this is in foure maneres ; that is, drede, shame, hope, and wanhope, that is, desperacioun. And for to speke first of drede, for which he demeth that he may suffre no penaunce. Ther-agayns is remedie for to thynke that bodily penaunce is but short and litel, at regard of the peynes of helle, that is so crueel and so long that it lasteth with-outen ende.

Now again, the shame that a man hath to shryven hym, and namely thise ypocrites that wolden been holden so parfite that they han no nede to shryven hem. Agayns² that shame sholde a man thynke that by wey of resoun that he that hath nat been shamed to doon foule thinges, certes hym oghte nat been ashamed to do faire thynges, and that is confessiouns. A man sholde eek thynke that God seeth and woot alle hise thoghtes and alle hise werkes ; to hym may no thyng been hyd ne covered. Men sholden eek remembren nem of the shame that is to come at the day of doome to hem that been nat penitent and shryven in this present lyf ; for alle the creatures in erthe and in helle shullen seen apertly **¶** that they hyden in this world.

¹ Cf. 18-226. ² Against. ³ Openly.

Now for to speken of hope of hem that been negligent and slowe to shryven hem ; that stant in two maneres. That oon is that he hopeth for to lyve longe and for to purchacen¹ muche richesse for his delit, and thanne he wol shryven hym, and as he seith, hym semeth thanne tymely ynough to come to shrifte. Another is [19,310] surquidrie,² that he hath in Cristes mercy. Agayns the firste vice, he shal thynke that oure lif is in no sikernesse, and eek that alle the riches in this world ben in aventure and passen as a shadwe on the wal ; and, as seith Seint Gregorie, that it aperteneth to the grete rightwisnesse of God, that nevere shal the payne stynte, of hem that nevere wolde withdrawn hem fro synne hir thanks,³ but ay continue in synne, for thilke perpetueel wil to do synne shul they han perpetueel payne.

Wanhope⁴ is in two maneres : the firste wanhope is in the mercy of Crist ; that oother is that they thynken that they ne myghte nat longe persevere in goodnesse. The firste wanhope comth of that he demeth that he hath synned so greetly, and so ofte, and so longe leyn in synne, that he shal nat be saved. [19,315] Certes, agayns that cursed wanhope sholde he thynke that the passion of Jhesu Crist is moore strong for to unbynde than synne is strong for to bynde. Agayns the seconde wan-

¹ Obtain. ² Presumption. ³ Willingly. ⁴ Despair.

hope he shal thynke that as ofte as he falleth he may arise agayn by penitence ; and though he never so longe have leyn in synne, the mercy of Crist is alwey redy to receiven hym to mercy. Agayns the wanhope that he demeth that he sholde nat longe persevere in goodnesse, he shal thynke that the feblesse of the devel may no thyng doon but if men wol suffren hym, and eek he shal han strengthe of the helpe of God, and of al hooly chirche, and of the proteccioun of aungels, if hym list.

Thanne shal men understonde what is the fruyt of penaunce ; and, after the word of Jhesu Crist, it is the endelees blisse of hevene. [19,320] Ther joye hath no contrariouste of wo, ne grevaunce ; ther alle harmes been passed of this present lyf ; ther as is the sikernes¹ fro the peyne of helle ; ther as is the blisful compaignye that rejoysen hem everemo everich of otheres joye ; ther as the body of man, that whilom was foul and derk, is moore cleer than the sonne ; ther as the body, that whilom was syk, freele, and fieble, and mortal, is inmortal and so strong and so hool that ther may no thyng apeyren² it ; ther as ne is neither hunger, thurst, ne coold, but every soule replenysed with the sighte of the parfit knowynge of God.

¹ Security. ² Impair.

This blisful regne¹ may men purchace² by poverte espiritueel, and the glorie by lowenness, the plentee of joye by hunger and thurst, and the reste by travaille, and the lyf by mortificacioun of synne.

Here taketh the Makere of this Book his Leve.

Now preye I to hem alle that herkne this litel tretys³ or rede, that if ther be any thyng in it that liketh hem, that ther-of they thanken oure Lord Jhesu Crist, of whom procedeth al [19,325] wit and al goodnesse; and if ther be any thyng that displese hem, I preye hem also that they arrette⁴ it to the defaute of myn unkonnyng, and nat to my wyl, that wolde ful fayn have seyde bettre if I hadde had konnyng; for oure boke seith, "Al that is writen is writen for oure doctrine," and that is myn entente.

Wherefore I biseke yow mekely, for the mercy of God, that ye preye for me that Crist have mercy on me and forgeve me my giltes, and namely⁵ of my translaciouns and enditynges of worldly vanitees the whiche I revoke in my Retracciouns;⁶ as is the book of Troylus; the book also of Fame; the book of the five and twynty Ladies; the book of the Duchesse; the book of Seint Valentynes day, of the Parlement

¹ Kingdom. ² Obtain. ³ Cf. 19,200. ⁴ Impute. ⁵ Especially
Apparently a work now lost.

of Briddes ; the Tales of Caunterbury, — thilke [19,330] that sownen¹ in to synne ; the book of the Leoun ;² and many another book, if they were in my remembrance ; and many a song and many a leccherous lay, that Crist, for his grete mercy, forgeve me the synne.

But of the translacioun of Boece *De Consolatione* and othere bookes of Legendes of Seintes, and omelies and moralitee, and devocioun, that thanke I oure Lord Jhesu Crist, and his blisful mooder and alle the Seintes of hevene, bi-sekyngge hem that they from hennes forth un-to my lyves ende sende me grace to biwayle my giltes and to studie to the salvacioun of my soule ; and graunte me grace of verray penitence, confessioun and satisfaccioun, to doon in this present lyf, thurgh the benigne grace of hym that is Kyng of Kynges, and Preest over alie Preestes, that boghte us with the precious [19,335] blood of his herte, so that I may been oon of hem at the day of doome that shulle be saved. *Qui cum Patre*³ *et Spiritu Sancto vivis et regnas Deus per omnia secula. Amen.*

Heere is ended the book of the Tales of Caunterbury, compiled by Geffrey Chaucer, of whose soule Jhesu Crist have mercy. Amen.

¹ Tend. ² Cf. l. 10,734. ³ Cf. l. 11,776.

CHAUCER'S A B C.

*La prière de Nostre Dame.*¹*Incipit carmen secundum ordinem Litterarum alphabeti.*

AL myghty and al mercyable Queene,
 To whom that al this world fleeth for socour
 To have relees of sinne, of sorwe, and teene!²
 Glorouse Virgine, of alle floures flour,
 To thee I flee confounded in errour.
 Help, and releeve, thou mihti debonayre,³
 Have mercy on my perilous langour!
 Venquissed me hath my cruelle adversaire.

Bountee⁴ so fix hath in thin herte his tente,
 That wel I wot, thou wolt my socour bee; 10
 Thou canst not warne⁵ him that with good
 entente

Axeth thin helpe, thin herte is ay so free!
 Thou art largesse, of pleyne felicitée,
 Havene of refute, of quiete, and of reste.
 Loo! how that theeves sevene⁶ chasen mee!
 Help! Lady bryght, er that my ship to-breste!

Comfort is noon, but in yow, Ladi deere!
 For loo, my sinne and my confusioun,
 Which ouhten not in thi presence appeere,
 Han take on me a greevous accioun 20

¹ This poem is a free version of a passage in *Le Pèlerinage de la Vie Humaine*, written by Guillaume de Deguileville, about 1330.
² Gentle one. ³ Goodness. ⁴ Refuse. ⁵ Seven days.

Of verrey riht and desperacioun !
 And as bi riht thei mihten wel susteene
 That I were wurthi my dampnacioun,
 Nere¹ merci of you, blisful hevene Queene !

Doute is ther noon, thou Queen of miseri-
 corde,²

That thou nart cause of grace and merci heere ;
 God vouched saf thurgh thee with us to accorde,
 For certes, Crystes blisful mooder deere !
 Were now the bowe bent in swich maneere
 As it was first, of justice and of ire, 30
 The rihtful God nolde of no mercy heere ;
 But thurgh thee han we grace as we desire.

Evere hath myn hope of refuit been in thee,
 For heer biforn ful ofte in many a wyse
 Hast thou to misericorde resceyved me ;
 But merci, Ladi ! at the grete assyse,
 Whan we shule come bifore the hye justyse !
 So litel fruit shal thanne in me be founde
 That, but thou er that daye me chastyse,
 Of verrey right my werk me wole confounde. 40

Fleeynge, I flee for socour to thi tente
 Me for to hide from tempeste ful of dreede,
 Biseeching yow that ye you not absente
 Thoub I be wikke ; O help yit at this neede !
 Al³ have I ben a beste in wil and deede,
 Yit, Ladi, thou me clothe with thi grace.
 Thin enemy and myn, Ladi, tak heede
 Un-to my deth in poynt is me to chace !

¹ Were it not for. ² Pity. ³ Although.

Glorious mayde and mooder which that nevere
 Were bitter,¹ neither in eerth nor in see, 50
 But ful of swetnesse and of merci evere,
 Help, that my Fader be not wroth with me!
 Spek thou, for I ne dar not him ysee,
 So have I doon, in eerthe, allas the while!
 That certes, but if thou my socour bee
 To stynk eterne he wole my gost exile!

He vouched saaf, tel him, as was his wille
 Bicomen a man to have oure alliaunce,
 And with his precious blood he wrot the bille
 Up-on the crois as general acquitaunce 60
 To every penitent in ful creaunce.²
 And therfore, Ladi bryght, thou for us praye!
 Thanne shalt thou bothe stinte al his grevaunce,
 And make oure foo to failen of his praye.

I wot it wel thou wolt ben oure socour,
 Thou art so ful of bountee in certeyn;
 For whan a soule falleth in errour
 Thi pitee goth and haleth³ him agein;
 Thanne makest thou his pees with his sovereyn,
 And bringest him out of the crooked strete. 70
 Who-so thee loveth he shal not love in veyn,
 That shal he fynde as he the lyf shal lete.⁴

Kalendeeres enlumyned⁵ ben thei
 That in this world ben lighted with thi name,
 And who-so goth to yow the rihte wey,
 Him thar not drede in soule to be lame.

¹ Mary is supposed to mean bitter. ² Faith. ³ Draweth (hauleth).
 Lose. ⁵ Red-letter days.

Now, Queen of comfort! sithe thou art that same
 To whom I seeche for my medicyne,
 Lat not my foo no more my wounde entame,¹
 Myn hele² in-to thin hand al I resyne. 80

Lady, thi sorwe kan I not portreye
 Under the cros, ne his greevous penaunce,
 But for youre bothes peynes I yow preye,
 Lat not oure alder³ foo make his bobaunce⁴
 That he hath in hise lystes of mischaunce
 Convict⁵ that ye bothe have bouht so deere.
 As I seide erst, thou ground of oure substaunce
 Continue on us thi pitous eyen cleere.

Moises that saugh the bush with flawmes rede
 Brenninge, of which ther never a stikke brende,
 Was signe of thin unwemmed maidenhede;⁶ 91
 Thou art the bush⁷ on which ther gan descende
 The Holi Goost, the which that Moyses wende
 Had ben a fyir, and this was in figure.
 Now, Lady, from the fyir thou us defende
 Which that in helle eternally shal dure.

Noble princesse that nevere haddest peere!
 Certes, if any comfort in us bee
 That cometh of thee, thou Cristes mooder deere,
 We han noon oother melodye or glee 103
 Us to rejoyse in oure adversitee,
 Ne advocat noon that wole and dar so preye
 For us, and that for litel hire as yee,
 That helpen for an Ave Marie or tweye.

¹ Cut open. ² Health. ³ Of all. ⁴ Boast. ⁵ Conquered (the
 soul). ⁶ Unstained maidenhood. ⁷ Cf. *Canterbury Tales*, l. 6080.

O verrey light of eyen that ben blynde !
 O verrey lust of labour and distresse !
 O tresoreere of bountee to mankynde !
 Thee whom God ches¹ to mooder for humblesse !
 From his ancille² he made the maistresse
 Of hevene and eerthe, oure bille³ up for to
 beede.⁴ 110

This world awaiteth evere on thi goodnesse,
 For thou ne failest nevere wight at neede.

Purpos I have sum time for to enquere
 Wherfore and whi the Holi Gost the souhte,
 Whan Gabrielles vois cam un-to thin ere ;
 He not to werre⁵ us swich a wunder wrouhte,
 But for to save us, that he sithen⁶ boughte ;
 'Thanne needeth us no wepene us for to save,
 But oonly ther we diden not as us oughte, —
 Doo penitence, and merci axe and have. 120

Queen of comfort ! yit whan I me bithinke
 That I agilt⁷ have bothe him and thee,
 And that my soule is wurthi for to sinke,
 Allas ! I caityf, whider may I flee ?
 Who shal un-to thi Sone my mene⁸ bee ?
 Who, but thi-self, that art of pitee welle ?
 Thou hast more reuthe on oure adversitee
 Than in this world might any tunge telle.

Redresse me, mooder, and me chastise,
 For certeynly my Faderes chastisinge 130
 That dar I nought abiden in no wise,

¹ Chose. ² Handmaid (Lat. *ancilla*). ³ Petition. ⁴ Offer
 Combat. ⁵ Afterwards. ⁶ Offended ⁷ Mediator.

So hidous it is hys rightful rekenynge.
 Mooder, of whom oure merci gan to springe,
 Beth ye my juge and eek my soules leche,¹
 For evere in you is pitee aboundinge
 To eche that wole of pitee you biseeche.

Soth is that God ne granteth no pitee
 With-oute thee ; for God of his goodnesse
 Forgiveth noon, but it like un-to thee ;
 He hath thee maked vicair and maistresse 140
 Of al the world, and eke governouresse
 Of hevene, and he represseth his justise
 After thi wil, and therfore in witesse,
 He hath thee corowned in so rial² wise.

Temple devout, ther God hath his woninge³
 Fro which these misbileeved deprived been,
 To you my soule penitent I bringe.
 Resceyve me, — I can no ferthere fleen
 With thornes venymous, O hevene Queen !
 For which the eerthe acursed was ful yore. 150
 I am so wounded as ye may wel seen
 That I am lost almost, it smert so sore.

Virgine, that art so noble of appaile,
 And ledest us in to the hye toure
 Of paradys, thou me wisse⁴ and counsaile
 How I may have thi grace and thi socour,
 Al have I ben in filthe and in errour.
 Ladi, un-to that court thou me ajourne
 That cleped is thi bench,⁵ O freshe flour !
 Ther as that merci evere shal sojourn. 160

¹ Physician. ² Royal. ³ Abode. ⁴ Teach. ⁵ Bank.

Xpc ¹ thi sone that in this world alighte
 Up-on the cros to suffre his passioun,
 And eek suffred that Longius ² his herte pighte,³
 And made his herte blood to renne adoun,
 And al was this for my salvacioun,
 And I to hym am fals and eek unkynde,
 And yit he wole not my dampnacioun ;
 This thanke I yow, sòcour of al mankynde !

Ysaac was figure of his deth certeyn,
 That so fer forth his fader wolde obeye, 176
 That him ne rouhte ⁴ no thing to be slayn ;
 Right soo thi Sone lust as a lamb to deye.
 Now, Lady ful of mercy ! I yow preye,
 Sithe he his mercy mesured so large,
 Be ye not skant, for alle we singe and seye
 That ye ben from vengeaunce ay oure targe.⁵

Zacharie yow clepeth the opene welle,
 To wasshe sinful soule out of his gilt ;
 Therfore this lessoun ought I wel to telle,
 That nere ⁶ thi tender herte we weren spilt.⁷
 Now, Lady, sithe thou canst and wilt, 181
 Ben to the seed of Adam merci able ;
 Bring us to that palais that is bilt
 To penitentes that ben to merci able. *Amen.*

Explicit carmen.

¹ Christ (Gr. Χριστός). ² The traditional blind soldier. ³ Pierced.
 Racked. ⁴ Shield. ⁵ Were it not for. ⁷ Ruined.

THE COMPLEYNTE TO PITE.

Complainte of the Deathe of Pitie. The Proem

PITE that I have sought so yore agoo
 With herte soore and ful of besy payne,
 That in this worlde was néver wight so woo
 With-oute dethe, and yf I shal not feyne,
 My purpose was to Pite to compleyne
 'Upon the crueltee and tirannye
 Of Love, that for my trouthe doth me to dye.

The Story.

And when that I, be lengthe of certeyne yeres,
 Had evere in oon a tyme soughte to speke,
 To Pitee ran I, al bespreynte with teres, 10
 To prayen hir on Cruelte me wreke;
 But er I myght with any worde out breke,
 Or tellen any of my peynes smerte,
 I fonde hir dede and buried in an herte.
 Adoune fel I when I saugh the herse,
 Dedde as stone while that the swogh me laste;
 But up I roose with coloure ful dyverse,
 And pitously on hir myn eyen I caste,
 And ner the corps I gan to presen faste,
 And for the soule I shope me for to prey; 20
 I was but lorne, ther was no more to sey.
 Thus am I slayne sith that Pite is dede;

Allas, that day, that ever hyt shuld falle !
 What maner man dar now holde up his hede ?
 To whom shal now eny sorwful herte calle ?
 Now Cruelte hath caste to slee us alle,
 In ydel hope, folke redelesse ¹ of peyne, —
 Syth she is dede, to whom shul we compleyne ?
 But yet encreseth me this wonder newe,
 That no wight woot that she is dede but I ; 30
 So many men as in her tyme hir knewe,
 And yet she dyed not so sodeynly,
 For I have sought hir ever ful besely
 Sith I hadde firste witte or mannes mynde,
 But she was dede er that I koude hir fynde.

Aboute hir herse there stoden lustely,
 Withouten any woo, as thoughte me,
 Bounte parfyt, wel-armed and richely,
 And fresshe Beaute, Lust and Jolyte,
 Assured-maner, Youthe and Honeste, 40
 Wisdome, Estaate, Drede, and Governauce,
 Confedred both by bonde and alliaunce.

A compleynt had I writen in myn honde,
 For to have put to Pittee as a bille ; ²
 But when I al this companye ther fonde,
 That rather wolde al my cause spille ³
 Then do me helpe, I helde my pleynte stille ;
 For to that folke, with-oute any fayle,
 Withoute Pitee ther may no bille a-vaile.
 Then leve we al vertues, save oonly Pite, 50
 Kepyng the corps, as ye have herd me seyn,

¹ Careless. ² Petition. ³ Ruin.

Cofedered by bonde and by Cruelte,
 And ben assented when I shal be sleyn,
 And I have put my Complaynt up ageyn,
 For to my foes my Bille I dar not shewe,
 Theeffect of which seith thus in wordes fewe.

The Bill of Complaint.

Humblest of herte, highest of reverence,
 Benygne flour, coroune of vertues alle !
 Sheweth un-to youre rialle excellence
 Yourre servaunt, yf I durste me so calle, 60
 Hys mortal harme in which he is falle ;
 And noght al oonly for his evel fare,
 But for your renoun, as he shal declare.

Hit stondeth thus, that your contraire Cruelte
 Allied is agenst your regalye,
 Under colour of womanly beaute, —
 For men shulde not knowe hir tirannye, —
 With Bounte, Gentillesse, and Curtesye,
 And hath depryved yow now of your place,
 That is hygh beaute apertenent to your grace ,
 For kyndely,¹ by youre herytage ryght, 71
 Ye be annexed ever unto Bounte,²
 And verrelly ye oughte do youre myght
 To helpe Trouthe in his adversyte ;
 Ye be also the corowne of Beaute,
 And certes, yf ye want³ in these tweyn
 The worlde is lore, ther is no more to seyn.

¹ Naturally. ² Goodness. ³ Lack

Eke what avaieth maner and gentillesse
 Withoute yow, benygne creature!
 Shal Cruelte be your governeresse? 80
 Allas! what herte may hyt long endure?
 Wherefore but ye the rather take cure
 To breke that perilouse alliaunce,
 Ye sleen hem that ben in your obeisaunce.
 And further-over, yf ye suffre this,
 Youre renoun ys fordoo then in a throwe, —
 Ther shal no man wete well what Pite is.
 Allas! that ever your renoun is falle so lowe!
 Ye be also fro youre heritage y-throwe
 By Cruelte, that occupieth youre place, 90
 And we despeyred that speken to your grace.
 Have mercy on me, thow hevenes Quene,
 That yow have sought so tendirly and yore,
 Let somme streme of lyght on me be sene,
 That love and drede yow ever lenger the more;
 For, sothely for to seyne, I bere so soore,
 And though I be not kunnyng for to pleyne,
 For Goddis love, have mercy on my peyne!

My peyne is this, that what-so I desire,
 That have I not, ne no thing lyk therto; 100
 And ever setteth desire myn hert on fire.
 Eke on that other sydes where-so I goo.
 What maner thinge that may encrease my woo
 That have I redy unsoghte, every where,
 Me lakketh but my deth, and than my bere.

What nedeth to shewe parcel of my peyne,

Syth every woo that herte may be-thynke,
 I suffre? And yet I dar not to yow pleyne,
 For wel I wote, though I wake or wynke,
 Ye rekke not where¹ I flete² or synke; **116**
 But natheles, yet my trouthe I shal sustene
 Unto my deth, and that shal wel be sene.
 This is to seyne, I wol be youres ever;
 Though ye me slee by Crueltee your foo,
 Algate my spirite shal never dissever
 Fro youre servise, for eny payne or woo!
 Sith ye be yet ded, — alas! that hyt is soo! —
 Thus for your deth I may wel wepe and pleyne
 With herte sore, and ful of besy payne!

THE DETHE OF BLAUNCHE THE DUCHESSE.³

I HAVE grete wonder, be this lyghte,
 How that I lyve, for day ne nyghte
 I may nat slepe wel nygh noght;
 I have so many an ydel thocht
 Purely for defaulte of slepe,
 That, by my trouthe, I take no kepe
 Of noo thinge how hyt cometh or gooth,
 Ne me nyg no thyngge leve nor looth.

¹ Whether. ² Float. ³ This poem is assumed to have been written for the death of Blanche, Duchess of Lancaster, the first wife of John of Gaunt, and as that event occurred September 12, 1369, the year 1369 is assigned as that in which the lines were composed. The subject is reached at line 759. Mr. Furnivall says that the poem contains the first exhibition of Chaucer's "love of books, of birds, of out-door life, of flowers and trees;" and Mr. Lowell says that it presents "one of the most beautiful portraits of a woman that ever was drawn." Cf. ll. 817-966.

Al is ylyche goode to me, —
 Joy or sorowe, wherso hyt be, — 10
 For I have felynge in no thyng,
 But as yt were a mased thyng
 Alway in poynt to falle a-doun ;
 For sorwful ymagynacioun
 Ys alway hooly in my mynde.

And wel ye woote agaynes kynde¹
 Hyt were to lyven in thys wyse,
 For Nature wolde nat suffyse
 To noon ertherly creature 20
 Nat longe tyme to endure
 With-oute slepe, and be in sorwe ;
 And I ne may, no nyght ne morwe,
 Slepe ; and thys melancolye
 And drede I have for to dye,
 Defaulte of slepe and hevynesse,
 Hath sleyne my spirite of quyknese²
 That I have loste al lusty-hede.
 Suche fantasies ben in myn hede
 So I not what is best too doo.

But men myght axe me why soo 30
 I may not sleepe, and what me is ?
 But nathles, who aske this
 Leseth his asking trewly.
 My selven can not tell why
 The southe ; but trewly, as I gesse,
 I hold it be a sickenes
 That I have suffred this eight yeere,
 And yet my boote³ is never the nere ;⁴

¹ Nature. ² Life. ³ Cure. ⁴ Nearer.

For there is phisicien but one
 That may me heale ; but that is done. 40
 Passe we over untill efte ;¹
 That will not be, mote nedes be lefte,
 Our first mater is good to kepe.

Soe when I saw I might not slepe
 Til nowe late, this other night
 Upon my bedde I sate upright
 And bade one reche me a booke,
 A romaunce, and it me tok
 To rede, and drive the night away ;
 For me thought it beter play 50
 Then play either at chesse or tables.²

And in this boke were written fables
 That clerkes had in olde tyme,
 And other poets, put in rime
 To rede, and for to be in minde
 While men loved the lawe of kinde.³
 This boke ne speake but of such thinges
 Of quenes lives, and of kings,
 And many other things smalle.
 Amonge all this I fonde a tale 60
 That me thought a wonder thing.

This was the tale : There was a king
 That hight Seyes,⁴ and had a wife,
 The beste that might beare lyfe ;
 And this quene hight Alcyone.
 Soe it befill, thereafter soone

¹ After. ² Backgammon. ³ Nature. ⁴ Ceyx. The story is told by Ovid, in his *Metamorphoses*.

This king woll wenden over see.
 To tellen shortly, whan that he
 Was in the see, thus in this wise,
 Soche a tempeste gan to rise 70
 That brake her maste and made it fal,
 And cleft ther ship, and dreint ¹ hem all,
 That never was founde, as it telles,
 Borde ne man, ne nothing elles.
 Right thus this king Seyes loste his life.

Now for to speake of Alcyone his wife.

This lady that was left at home
 Hath wonder that the king ne come
 Home, for it was a longe terme.
 Anone her herte began to yerne, 80
 And for that her thought evermo
 It was not wele, — her thought soe.
 She longed soe after the king,
 That certes, it were a pitous thing
 To tell her hertely sorowfull life
 That she had, this noble wife,
 For him, alas, she loved alderbeste! ²
 Anone she sent bothe eeste and weste
 To seke him, but they founde nought.

“Alas,” quoth shee, “that I was wrought! 90
 And where ³ my lord, my love, be deed?
 Certes, I will never eate breede, —
 I make a vowe to my god here, —
 But I mowe of my lord here.”

Soche sorowe this lady to her toke,

¹ Drowned ² Best of all. ³ Whether.

That trewly I which made this booke
 Had suche pittee and suche rowthe
 To rede hir sorwe, that by my trowthe,
 I ferde the worse al the morwe
 And aftir, to thenken on hir sorwe. 100

So whan this lady koude here noo worde
 That no man myght fynde hir lorde,
 Ful ofte she swouned, and sayed, "Alas!"
 For sorwe ful nygh woode¹ she was,
 Ne she koude no rede but oon ;
 But doone on knees she sate anoon
 And wepte, that pittee was to here.

"A mercy, swete lady dere!"
 Quod she to Juno, hir goddesse ;
 "Helpe me out of thys distresse, 110
 And geve me grace my lord to se
 Soone, or wete² wher-so he be,
 Or how he fareth, or in what wise,
 And I shal make yowe sacrificise
 And hooly youres become I shal
 With good wille, body, hert, and al ;
 And but thow wilte this, lady swete,
 Sende me grace to slepe, and mete³
 In my slepe somme certeyn sweven,⁴
 Wher-thorgh that I may knowe even 120
 Whethir my lorde be quyke or ded."

With that worde she henge doun the hed
 And felle a-swowne as colde as ston.
 Hyr women kaught hir up anoon,

¹ Mad. ² Know. ³ Dream. ⁴ Dream.

And broghten hir in bed al naked,
 And she, forweped and forwaked,¹
 Was wery, and thus the ded slepe
 Fil on hir, or she tooke kepe,
 Throgh Juno that had herde hir bone,²
 That made hir to slepe sone ; 130
 For as she prayede, ryght so was done
 In dede, for Juno ryght anone
 Callede thus hir messagere ³
 To doo hir erande, and he come nere.
 Whan he was come, she bad hym thus :
 “ Go bet,”⁴ quod Juno, “ to Morpheus, —
 ‘Thou knowest hym wel, the god of slepe, —
 Now understonde wel, and take kepe ;
 Sey thus, on my halfe,⁵ that he
 Go faste in-to the grete se, 140
 And byd hym that, on alle thynges,
 That he take up Seys body the kynges,
 That lyeth ful pale and no thynges rody.⁶
 Byd hym crepe in-to the body
 And doo⁷ hit goon to Alchione
 The quene, ther she lyeth allone,
 And shewe hir shortly — hit ys no nay !⁸ —
 How hit was dreynt thys other day,
 And do the body speke ryght soo,
 Ryght as hyt was woned⁹ to doo 150
 The whiles that hit was a lyve.
 Goo now faste, and hye the blyve !”

¹ Exhausted by intense weeping and watching. ² Granted her boon. ³ Iris. ⁴ Go fast. Cf. *Canterbury Tales*, l. 9741. ⁵ In my name. ⁶ Ruddy. ⁷ Cause. ⁸ You must not refuse! ⁹ Wont.

This messenger toke leve and went
 Upon hys wey, and never ne stent,
 Til he come to the derke valey
 That stant betwexe roches twey,
 Ther never yet grew corne ne gras,
 Ne tre, ne noght that oughte was,
 Beste ne man, ne noght elles,
 Save ther were a fewe welles ¹
 Came rennyng fro the clyffes a-doun,
 That made a dedely, slepyng soun,
 And ronnen doun ryght by a cave
 That was under a rokke y-grave
 Amydde the valey, wonder depe.
 There these goddys lay and slepe, —
 Morpheus, and Eclympasteyre, ²
 That was the god of slepes eyre,
 That slepe and did noon other werke.

160

This cave was also as derke
 As helle pitte over al a-boute.
 They had good leyser for to route, ³
 To envye who myght slepe beste.
 Somme henge her chyn upon hir breste
 And slept upryght, hir hed y-hedde, ⁴
 And somme lay naked in her bedde
 And slepe whiles the dayes laste.

170

This messenger come fleyng faste
 And cried, "O, ho! a-wake anoon!"

¹ Springs. ² Professor Ten Brink holds this to be a word compounded by Chaucer of two names of a son of Morpheus mentioned by Ovid. Tyrwhitt could not understand it. In Bell's Chaucer it is traced to a rare form of a Greek word meaning death. M. Sanders finds the name in Froissart. ³ Snore. ⁴ Hidden.

Hit was for noght, there herde hym non, 180

"A-wake!" quod he, "whoo ys lythe there!"

And blew his horne ryght in here eere

And cried, "A-waketh!" wonder hye.¹

This god of slepe, with hys on ye,

Caste up, and axed, "Who clepeth there?"

"Hyt am I," quod this messagere,

"Juno bad thow shuldest goon," —

And tolde hym what he shulde doon

As I have tolde yow here to-fore,

Hyt ys no nede reherse hyt more,

190

And went hys wey whan he had sayde.

Anoon this god of slepe a-brayed²

Out of hys slepe, and gan to goon,

And dyd as he had bede hym doon ;

Tooke up the dreynte body sone

And bare hyt forth to Alchione,

Hys wife the quene, ther as she lay,

Ryght even a quarter before day,

And stood ryght at hys beddys fete,

And called hir ryght as she hete³

200

By name, and sayede, "My swete wyfe,

Awake! let be your sorwful lyfe!

For in your sorwe there lyth no rede ;⁴

For certes, swete, I am but dede,

Ye shul me never on lyve y-se,

But, good swete herte, loke that ye

Bury my body, for suche a tyde

Ye mowe hyt fynde the see besyde ;

¹ Loudly ² Started. ³ Was named. ⁴ Reason.

And fare-wel, swete, my worldes blysse !
 I pray God youre sorwe lysse ;¹ 210
 To lytel while oure blysse lasteth ! ”

With that hir eyen up she casteth
 And sawe noght. “ Allas ! ” quod she for
 sorwe,

And deyede within the thridde morwe.
 But what she sayede more in that sorowe
 I may not telle yow as nowe,
 Hyt were to longe for to dwelle,
 My first matere I wil yow telle,
 Wherfore I have tolde this thyng
 Of Alchione and Seys the kynge. 220

For thus moche dar I say welle,
 I had be dolven² everydelle,
 And ded ryght thorgh defaulte of slepe,
 Gif I ne had redde and take kepe
 Of this tale nexte before ;
 And I wol telle yow wherfore ;
 For I ne myght, for bote ne bale,
 Slepe, or I had redde thys tale
 Of this dreynte Seys the kynge
 And of the goddis of slepyng. 230

Whan I had redde thys tale wel,
 And over loked hyt everydel,
 Me thoght wonder yf hit were so,
 For I had never herde speke, or tho,³
 Of noo goddis that koude make
 Men to slepe, ne for to wake ;

¹ Ease. ² Buried. ³ Ere then.

For I ne knewe never God but oon,
 And in my game, I sayede anoon, —
 And yet me lyst ryght evel to pley, —
 “ Rather than that I shulde dey 240
 Thorgh defaulte of slepyng thus,
 I wolde give thilke Morpheus
 Or hys goddesse, dame Juno,
 Or somme wight ellis, I ne roght ¹ who,
 To make me slepe and have some reste, —
 I wil give hym the alder-beste
 Gifte that ever he abode ² hys lyve.
 And here onwarde, ryght now as blyve,
 Gif he wol make me slepe a lyte,
 Of downe of pure douves white 250
 I wil gif hym a fēder bedde,
 Rayed ³ with golde, and ryght wel cledde
 In fyne blak satyn *de outer mere*,⁴
 And many a pelowe, and every bere
 Of clothe of Reynes,⁶ to slepe softe
 Hym thar not nede to turnen ofte.
 And I wol give hym al that fallys ⁷
 To a chambre, and al hys hallys
 I wol do peynte with pure golde,
 And tapite ⁸ hem ful many folde 260
 Of oo sute ; this shal he have
 Yf I wiste where were hys cave,
 Yf he kan make me slepe sone,
 As did the goddesse, quene Alchione ;

¹ Recked. ² Waited for. ³ Arrayed. ⁴ From beyond sea (Fr. *Poutre mer*). ⁵ Case. Cf. *Canterbury Tales*, l. 694. ⁶ Rennes, a Bretagne. ⁷ Belongs. ⁸ Hang with tapestry.

And thus this ylke god, Morpheus,
 May wyne of me moo fees thus
 Than ever he wanne; and to Juno
 That ys hys goddesse I shal soo do,
 I trow, that she shal holde hir payede."

I hadde unneth¹ that worde y-sayede 270
 Ryght thus I have tolde hyt yow,
 That sodeynly, I nyste² how,
 Suche a luste anoon me tooke
 To slepe, that ryght upon my booke
 Y fil aslepe, and therwith evene
 Me mette so ynly³ swete a swevene,⁴
 So wonderful, that never yitte
 Y trowe no man had the wytte
 To konne wel my sweven rede.

No, not Joseph, with-oute drede,⁵ 280
 Of Egipte, he that redde so
 The kynges metynge, Pharao,
 No more than koude the lest of us.

Ne nat skarsly Macrobeus,⁶
 He that wrote al thavysyoun
 That he mette, kynge Scipioun,
 The noble man, the Affrikan, —
 Suche marvayles fortunéd than, —
 I trowe a-rede my dremes even.
 Loo, thus hyt was thys was my sweven. 290

¹ Scarcely. ² Ne wiste, knew not. ³ Thoroughly (inwardly) Dream. ⁴ In faith. ⁵ Cf. *Parlement of Foules*, l. 29.

The Dream.

Me thoghte thus, — that hyt was **May**,
 And in the dawninge I lay.
 Me mette thus, in my bed al naked,
 And loked forth, for I was waked
 With smale foules a grete hepe,
 That had affrayed me out of my slepe
 Thorgh noyse and swettenesse of her songe.
 And al me mette they sate a-monge ¹
 Upon my chambre roofe wyth-oute
 Upon the tyles over al a-boute, 300
 And songe, everych in hys wyse,
 The moste solempne servise
 By noote, that ever man, I trowe,
 Had herde ; for somme of hem songe lowe,
 Somme high, and al of oon acorde.
 To telle shortly, att oo worde,
 Was never harde so swete a steven,² —
 But hyt had be a thyng of heven, —
 So mery a soun, so swete entewnes,
 That certes, for the toun of Tewnes,³ 310
 I nolde,⁴ but I had herde hem synge,
 For al my chambre gan to rynge
 Thorgh syngynge of her armonye.
 For instrument nor melodye
 Was nowhere herde yet halfe so swete,
 Nor of a-corde halfe so mete ;

¹ Here and there. ² Note. ³ Town of Tunis. ⁴ Would not.

For ther was noon of hem that feyned
 To synge, for eche of hem hym peyned
 To fynde out of mery crafty notys,
 They ne spared not her throtys.

320

And soothe to seyn my chambre was
 Ful wel depeynted, and with glas
 Were al the wyndowes wel y-glasyd
 Ful clere, and nat an hoole y-crasyd,¹
 That to be-holde hyt was grete joye ;
 For holy al the story of Troye
 Was in the glasyng y-wroght thus,
 Of Ector, and of kyng Priamus ;
 Of Achilles, and of kyng Lamedoun,
 And eke of Medea and of Jasoun ;
 Of Paris, Eleyne, and of Lavyne ;
 And alle the wallys with colouris fyne
 Were peynted, bothe text and glose,
 And al the Romaunce of the Rose.

330

My wyndowes were shette echon
 And throgh the glas the sonne shon
 Upon my bed with bryght bemys,
 With many glade,² gilde stremys ;
 And eke the welken was so faire, —
 Blew, bryght, clere was the ayre,
 And ful attempre for-sothe hyt was ;
 For nother to colde nor hoote yt was,
 Ne in al the welkene was a clowde.

340

And as I lay thus, wonder lowde
 Me thoght I herde an hunte³ blowe,

¹ Broken (Fr. *écrasé*). ² Glad. ³ Hunter.

"THEY WOLDE ON HUNTYNGE GOON." 295

Tassay hys horne, and for to knowe
Whether hyt were clere, or horse of soun.

And I herde goynge, bothe up and doune ;
Men, hors, houndes, and other thyng,
And al men speke of huntynge ; 350
How they wolde slee the herte with strengthe,
And how the hert had upon lengthe
So moche embosed,¹ I not² now what.

Anoon ryght whan I herde that
How that they wolde on huntynge goon,
I was ryght glad and up anoon
Tooke my hors and forthe I went
Out of my chambre, I never stent
Til I come to the felde withoute.
Ther overtoke I a grete route 360
Of huntis³ and eke of foresterys,
With many relayes and lymerys,⁴
And hyed hem to the forest faste,
And I with hem. So at the laste
I asked oon⁵ ladde a lymere,
"Say, felowe, whoo shal hunte here?"

Quod I ; and he answered ageyn,
"Syr, themperour Octovyen,"⁶
Quod he, "and ys here fast by."
"A goddys halfe,⁷ in goode tyme !" quod I. 370
"Go we faste !" and gan to ryde.
Whan we came to the forest syde
Every man didde ryght anoon
As to huntynge fille to doon.

¹ Foamed at mouth. ² Know not. ³ Hunters. ⁴ A sort of dog.
One who ⁵ Octavian, whose fabulous adventures are related in
medieval romances. ⁷ In God's name

The mayster hunte anoon, fote hote,¹
 With a grete horne blewe thre mote²
 At the uncouplynge of hys houndys.
 Withynne a while the herte founde ys
 I-halowed³ and rechased⁴ faste
 Longe tyme; and so at the laste 380
 This hert rused and staaie away
 Fro alle the houndes a prevy way.
 The houndes had overshette⁵ hym alle,
 And were upon a defaulte y-falle.
 Therwyth the hunte wonder faste
 Blewe a "forleygne"⁶ at the laste.

I was go walked fro my tree,
 And as I went ther came by mee
 A whelpe, that fawned me as I stode,
 That hadde y-folowed and koude no goode. 390
 Hyt come and crepte to me as lowe
 Ryght as hyt hadde me y-knowe,
 Hylde doun hys hede and joyned hys erys,
 And leyde al smothe doun hys herys.
 I wolde have kaught hyt, and anoon;
 Hyt fledde, and was fro me goon.
 And I hym folwed, and hyt forthe went
 Doune by a floury, grene went⁷
 Ful thikke of gras, ful softe and swete,
 With flourys fele,⁸ faire under fete, 400
 And litel used, hyt semed thus;
 For both Flora and Zephirus,

¹ Quickly. Cf. *Canterbury Tales*, l. 4860. ² Movements, strains.
 Taily-hoed. ⁴ Headed back. ⁵ Gone by (overshot). ⁶ Gone
 away (Old Fr. *forloigne*). ⁷ Path. ⁸ Many (Ger. *viel*).

They two that make floures growe,
 Had made her dwellynge ther, I trowe,
 For hit was on to be-holde
 As thogh therthe envye wolde
 To be gayer than the heven,
 To have moo floures swche seven ¹
 As in the walkene sterris bee.
 Hyt had forgete the povertie 410
 That wynter, thorgh hys colde morwes,
 Had made hyt suffre, and his sorwes,
 All was for-getsen, and that was sene
 For al the woode was waxen grene ;
 Swetnesse of dewe had made hyt waxe.

Hyт ys no nede eke for to axe
 Where ² there were many grene greves, ³
 Or thikke ⁴ of trees so ful of leves ;
 And every tree stooде by hym-selve,
 Fro other wel ⁵ tene fete or twelve. 420
 So grete trees, so huge of strengthe,
 Or fourty, fifty fedme lengthe,
 Clene withoute bowgh or stikke,
 With croppes ⁶ brode and eke as thikke, —
 They were nat an ynche a sonder, —
 That hit was shadewe over al under ;
 And many an herte and many an hynde
 Was both before me and be-hynde.

Of founes, ⁷ sowres, ⁸ bukkes, does,
 Was ful the woode ; and many roes, 430

¹ Completeness. The Pleiades are the seven stars in *Taurus*,
 Whether. ² Groves. ³ Thicket. ⁴ As much as. ⁵ Tops
 Fawns. ⁶ Bucks three years old.

And many sqwireles, that sete
 Ful high upon the trees and ete,
 And in hir maner made festys.
 Shortly, hyt was so ful of bestys,
 That thogh Argus,¹ the noble counter,
 Sete to rekene in hys counter,
 And rekene with his figuris ten, —
 For by tho figuris new² al ken,
 Yf they be crafty, rekene and noumbre
 And tel of every thinge the noumbre, — 443
 Yet shulde he fayle to rekene evene
 The wondres me mette in my swevene.

But forth they romed ryght wonder faste
 Doune the woode ; so at the laste
 I was war of a man in blak,³
 That sete, and had turned his bak
 To an ooke, an huge tree.

“Lorde !” thoght I, “who may that be ?
 What ayleth hym to sitten here ?”
 Anoon ryghte I wente nere. 450
 Than founde I sitte even upryght
 A wonder wel farynge knyght, —
 By the maner me thoghte soo, —
 Of good mochel, and ryght yonge therto,
 Of the age of foure and twenty⁴ yere,
 Upon hys berde but lytel here,
 And he was clothed al in blake.

¹ Algous, inventor of the abacus. ² From Tanner MS., 346. The Arabic numbers were “new” in Europe in Chaucer’s time, and were not much used until the introduction of printing. ³ Supposed to be John of Gaunt, in mourning. ⁴ John was, however, twenty-nine when his duchess died.

I stalked even unto hys bake,
 And there I stode as stille as ought,
 That, soth to saye, he sawe me nought; 460
 For why? He henge hys hede adoune,
 And with a dedely, sorwful soun
 He made of ryme tenne vers or twelfe
 Of a Compleynte to hym-selfe,
 The moste pitee, the moste rowthe,
 That ever I herde, for by my trowthe,
 Hit was gret wonder that Nature
 Myght suffre any creature
 To have suche sorwe, and be not ded.
 Ful petuose,¹ pale, and no-thinge red, 470
 He sayed a lay, a maner songe,
 With-oute noote, withoute songe;
 And was thys, for ful wel I kan
 Reherse hyt ryght, — thus hyt began.

*I have of sorwe so grete wone²
 That joy gete I never none,
 Now that I see my lady bryght,
 Which I have loved with al my myght,
 Is fro me ded and ys a-goon
 And thus in sorowe lefte me alone.³* 480

*Allas, Dethe, what ayleth the
 That thou noldest have taken me*

¹ Piteous. ² Wont. ³ This line from Thynne's Chaucer has caused much discussion. Mr. Furnivall has no doubt that a line has been lost. Mr. Skea thinks it was the third of the lay. Mr. A. J. Ellis says that none is needed, that the "maner songe" is designedly irregular, and is weakened by any addition.

*Whan thou toke my lady swete
That was so faire, so freshe, so fre,
So goode, that men may wel se
Of al goodenesse she had no mete.*

Whan he had made thus his complaynt,
Hys sorwful hert gan faste faynt,
And his spiritis wexen dede ;
The bloode was fled for pure drede 490
Doun to hys hert, to make him warme ;
For wel hyt feled the hert had harme ;
To wete ¹ eke why hyt was a-drad
By kynde, and for to make hyt glad ;
For hit ys membre principal
Of the body ; and that make al
Hys hewe chaunge, and wexe grene,
And pale, for ther noo bloode ys sene
In no maner lymme of hys.

Anoon therwith whan I sawgh this, 500
He ferde thus evel there he sete,
I went and stooode ryght at his fete,
And grette ² hym, but he spake noght,
But argued with his oune thoght
And in hys wytte disputed faste,
Why and how hys lyfe myght laste, —
Hym thought hys sorwes were so smerte
And lay so colde upon hys herte.

So, throggh hys sorwes and hevy thoght,
Made hym ³ that he herde me noght 510

¹ Know ² Greeted. ³ He made as though.

For he had wel-nygh loste hys mynde
 Thogh Pan, that men clepe the god of kynde,
 Were for hys sorwes never so wrothe.

But at the last, to sayn ryght sothe,
 He was war of me how I stooode
 Before hym, and did of¹ myn hoode,
 And had ygret hym as I best koude.
 Debonayrly, and no thyng lowde,
 He sayde, "I prey the be not wrothe ;
 I herde the not, to seyn the sothe, 520
 Ne I sawgh the not, syr, trewly."

"A! good sire, no fors,"² quod I,
 "I am ryght sory gif I have oughte
 Destroubled yow out of your thoughte ;
 For-give me, gif I have mys-take."

"Yis, thamendys is lyght³ to make,"
 Quod he, "for ther lyeth noon ther-to,
 There ys no thyng myssayde nor do."

Loo ! how goodely spake thys knyghte,
 As hit had be a-nother wyghte. 530
 He made hyt nouthur towgh ne queynte,⁴
 And I sawe that, and gan me aqueynt
 With hym, and fonde hym so trefable
 Ryght wonder skylful⁵ and resonable,
 As me thoghte, for al hys bale ;
 A-noon ryght I gan fynde a tale
 To hym, to loke wher⁶ I myght oughte
 Have more knowynge of hys thoughte.

¹ Doffed. ² No matter
 nonai ³ Whether

Easy ⁴ Difficult nor strange. ⁵ Ra-

“Sir,” quod I, “this game is doon ;
 I holde that this hert be goon ; 540
 These huntys konne hym nowher see.”

“I do no fors therof,” quod he,
 “My thought ys there-on never a dele.”

“Be oure Lorde!” quod I, “I trow yow wele,
 Ryght so me thenketh by youre chere.
 But, sir, oo thyng, wol ye here ?
 Me thynketh in grete sorowe I yow see ;
 But certys, sire, gif that yee
 Wolde ought discure¹ me youre woo
 I wolde, as wys² God helpe me soo ! 550
 Amende hyt, gif I kan or may.
 Ye mowe preve hyt by assay,
 For, by my trouthe, to make yow hool,
 I wol do alle my power hool ;
 And telleth me of your sorwes smerte,
Paraunter hyt may ease youre herte,
 That semeth ful seke under your syde.”

With that he loked on me asyde,
 As who sayth, “Nay, that wol not be.”
 “*Graunt mercy !* goode frende,” quod he, 560
 “I thanke the that thow woldest soo,
 But hyt may never the rather³ be doo.
 No man ne may my sorwe glade
 That maketh my hewe to fal and fade,
 And hath myn understandyng lorne,
 That me ys woo that I was borne !
 May noht make my sorwes slyde, —

¹ Discover ² Certainly. ³ Sooner

Nought al the remedyes of Ovyde ;¹
 Ne Orpheus, god of meloóye ;
 Ne Dedalus, wth his playes slye ; 570
 Ne hele me may noo phisicien,
 Noght Ypocras, ne Galyen ;
 Me ys woo that I lyve oures twelve,
 But whoo so wol assay hym-selve
 Whether his hert kan have pitee
 Of any sorwe, lat hym see me.
 Y, wrech, that deth hath made al naked
 Of al blysse that ever was maked ;
 Y worthe² worste of al wyghtys, —
 That hate my dayes and my nyghtys ; 580
 My lyfe, my lustes, be me loothe
 For al welfare, and I be wroothe.
 The pure³ Deth ys so ful my foo
 That I wolde deye, hyt wolde not soo ;
 For whan I folwe hyt, hit wol flee ;
 I wolde have hym, hyt nyl nat me.
 This ys my peyne wythoute rede,
 Alway deyng and be not dede,
 That Thesiphus,⁴ that lyeth in helle,
 May not of more sorwe telle ; 590
 And who-so wiste alle, be my trouthe,
 My sorwe, but he hadde rowthe
 And pitee of my sorwes smerte,
 That man hath a fendely herte ;
 For who so seeth me firste on morwe⁵

¹ 1. his *Remedium Amoris*. ² Be, as in the expression, "W^o worth the day!" ³ Very. ⁴ Sisyphus. ⁵ A-morning.

May seyn he hath mette with Sorwe,
For I am Sorwe, and Sorwe ys I.

‘Allas ! and I wol tel the why ;
My sorowe ys turned to pleyntyng,
And al my lawghtre to wepyng, 600
My glade thoghtys to hevynesse,
In travayle ys myn ydelnesse,
And eke my reste ; my wele is woo,
My goode ys harme, and ever moo
In wrathe ys turned my pleyng,
And my delyte in-to sorwyng.
Myn hele ys turned in-to sekeenesse,
In drede ys al my sykernesse ;¹
To derke ys turned al my lyghte,
My wytte ys foly, my day ys nyghte, 610
My love ys hate, my slepe wakyng,
My merthe and meles ys fastyng,
My countenaunce ys nycete,²
And al abawed ³ where-so I be.
My pees in pledyng, and in werre.
Allas ! how myght I fare werre ? ⁴

“ My boldenesse ys turned to shame,
For fals Fortune hath pleyde a game
Atte the chesse with me, — allas ! the while !
The trayteresse fals, and ful of gyle, 62
That al behoteth,⁵ and no thyng halte,⁶
She gethe upryght, and yet she is halte,
That baggeth ⁷ foule, and loketh faire,

¹ Confidence. ² Shame. ³ Astonished. ⁴ Worse. ⁵ Promises
⁶ Holds, fulfills. ⁷ Squinteth.

The dispitouse debonaire !
 That skorneth many a creature.
 An ydole of fals portrayture
 Ys she, for she wol sone varien.
 She is the monstres, hed y-wrien,¹
 As fylthe over y-strawed with flouris.
 Hir moste worshippe and hir flour ys 630
 To lyen, for that ys hyr nature ;
 With-oute feythe, lawe, or mesure,
 She ys fals, and ever lawghynge
 With one yghe, and that other wepynge.
 That ys broght up she sette al down ;
 I lykne hyr to the scorioun,
 That ys a fals, flateyrynge beste,
 For with his hede he maketh feste,
 But, al amydde hys flaterynge,
 With hys tayle hyt wol styng 640
 And envenyme, and so wol she.
 She ys thenvyouse Charite,
 That ys ay fals, and semeth wele,
 So turneth she hyr false whele
 Aboute, for hyt ys no thyng stable,
 Now by the fire, now atte table ;
 For many oon hath thus she yblent.²
 She ys pley of enchauntement
 That semeth oon, and ys not soo.
 'The fals thefe ! what hath she doo, 650
 'Trowest thou ? By oure Lorde, I wol the sey.
 " At the chesse with me she gan to pley ;

¹ Turned. ² Blinded, duped.

She oght the more excused be
 For this. I say yet more ther-to, —
 Had I be God and myghte have do 680
 My wille, whan she my fers kaught,
 I wolde have drawe the same draught.¹
 For, also wys God give me reste !
 I dar wel swere, she tooke the beste.

"But throghe that draughte I have lorne
 My blysse. Allas ! that I was borne,
 For evermore I trowe trewly,
 For al my wille, my luste holly
 Ys turned ; but yet, what to doone ?
 Be oure Lorde ! hyt ys to deye soone, 690
 For no thyng I leve ² hyt noght,
 But lyve and deye ryght in this thoght.
 For there nys planete in firmament
 Ne in ayre, ne in erthe, noon element
 That they ne give me a gifte ³ echon
 Of wepyng, whan I am allon.
 For whan that I avise me wel,
 And be-thenke me every del,
 How that ther lyeth in rekenyng
 Inne my sorwe for no thyng ; ⁴ 700
 And how ther levyth noe gladnesse
 May glad me of my distresse,
 And how I have loste suffisance,
 And ther-to I have no plesance,
 Than may I say I have ryght noght.

¹ Have taken her fers. ² Believe. ³ Alluding to planetary "influ-
 ences." ⁴ No counting his sorrows.

And whan al this falleth in my thoght,
 Allas, than am I overcome !
 For that ys doon ys not to come :¹
 I have more sorowe than Tantale !”

And whan I herde hym tel thys tale 710
 Thus pitously, as I yow telle,
 Unnethe² myght I lenger duelle,
 Hyt dyd myn hert so moche woo..

“A, goode sir !” quod I, “say not soo !
 Have somme pitee on your nature
 That formed yow to creature.
 Remembre yow of Socrates,
 For he ne counted nat thre strees³
 Of noght that Fortune koude doo.”

“No,” quod he, “I kan not soo.” 720

“Why so, good syr ? yis, *parde !*” quod I ;
 “Ne noghte soo, for trewely,
 Thogh ye had loste the ferses twelve,⁴
 And ye for sorwe mordred your selve,
 Ye sholde be dampned in this cas
 By as goode ryght as Medea⁵ was,
 That slowgh hir children for Jasoun ;
 And Phyllis also for Demophoun
 Henge hir-selfe, so weylaway !
 For he had broke his terme day 730
 To come to hir. Another rage
 Had Dydo, the quene eke of Cartage,

¹ The past will not return. ² Scarcely. ³ Straws. ⁴ An extravagant reference to all the chief pieces.

That slough hir selfe, for Eneas
 Was fals, which a foole she was !
 And Ecquo¹ died for Narcisus
 Nolde nat love hir ; and ryght thus
 Hath many another foly doon.
 And for Dalida died Sampson,²
 That slough hym-selfe with a pilere, —
 But ther is no man a-lyve here 740
 Wolde for a fers make this woo ! "

" Why so ! " quod he, " hyt ys nat soo ;
 Thou woste ful lytel what thou menyst ;
 I have loste more than thow wenyst."
 " Loo, sir, how that may be ? " quod I ;
 " Good sir, telle me al hooly
 In what wyse, how, why, and wherfore,
 That ye have thus youre blysse lore."

" Blythely," quod he ; " come sytte adoon !
 I telle hyt the up condicion 750
 That thou shalt hooly with al thy wytte
 Doo thyn entent to herkene hitte."
 " Yis, syr ! "

" Swere thy trouthe ther-to."

" Gladly."

" Do thanne holde here-to."

" I shal, ryght blythely, so God me save !
 Hooly with al the witte I have
 Here yow as wel as I kan."

" A Goddys halfe ! " quod he, and began :

" Syr," quod he, " sith firste I kouthe

¹ Echo. ² Cf. *Canterbury Tales*, l. 7675.

Have any maner wytte fro youthe, 760
 Or kyndely ¹ understondynge
 To comprehende in any thyng
 What love was in myn oune wytte,
 Dredeles ² I have ever yitte
 Be tributarye and give rente
 To love, hooly with goode entente,
 And throgh plesaunce become his thralle
 With good wille, body, hert, and alle.
 Al this I putte in his servage,
 As to my lorde, and did homage, 770
 And ful devoutely I prayed hym to,
 He shulde besette myn hert so,
 That hyt plesance to hym were,
 And worshippe to my lady dere.

“ And this was longe, and many a yere,
 Or that myn herte was set owhere,³
 That I did thus, and nyste why,
 I trowe, hit came me kyndely.

Peraventure I was therto moste able
 As a white walle or a table, 780
 For hit ys redy to cach and take
 Al that men wille theryn make,
 Whethir so men wil portrey or peynt,
 Be the werkes never so queynt.

“ And thilke tyme I ferde ryght so
 I was able to have lerned tho,
 And to have kende as wel or better
Paraunter other arte or letre,

¹ Natural. ² Doubtless, in faith. ³ In one place.

But for love came firste in my thoght,
Therefore I forgate hyt noght. 790

I ches love to my first crafte,
Therefore hit ys with me ylafte.
For why? I toke hyt of so yonge age
That malyce had my corage
Nat that tyme turned to no thyng,
Thorogh to mochel knowlachyng.
For that tyme Yowthe, my maistresse,
Governed me in ydelnesse,
For hyt was in my firste youthe,¹
And thoo ful lytel goode I couthe, 800
For al my werkes were flyttyng
That tyme, and al my thoght varyinge,
Al were to me ylyche goode,
That I knewe thoo, but thus hit stode.

"Hit happed that I came on a day
In-to a place ther that I say²
Trewely the fayrest companye
Off ladyes, that evere man with ye
Had seen to-gedres in oo place.
Shal I clepe hyt happe, other grace 810
That broght me there? Nay, but Fortune,
That ys to lyen ful comune, —
The fals trayteresse, pervers!
God wolde I koude clepe hir wers!
For now she worcheth me ful woo,
And I wol tel sone why soo.

"Amonge these ladyes thus echon,

¹ John of Gaunt was married at nineteen. ² Saw.

Soth to seyn, I sawgh oon
 That was lyke noon of the route,
 For I dar swere, withoute doute, 820
 That as the somerys sonne bryghte
 Ys fairer, clerer, and hath more lyghte
 Than any othere planete in hevene,
 The moone, or the sterres sevene ;
 For al the worlde so had she
 Surmountede hem al of beaute,
 Of maner, and of comelynesse,
 Of stature, and of wel sette gladnesse,
 Of godelyhede, and so wel be-sey,¹ —
 Shortly, what shal I sey ? 830
 By God, and by halwes ² twelve,
 Hyt was my swete, ryght al hir-selve !³
 She had so stedfaste countenaunce,
 So noble porte and meyntenaunce,
 And love, that had wel herd my boone,
 Had espyed me thus soone,
 That she ful sone, in my thoght,
 As helpe me God, so was I kaught
 So sodenly, that I ne toke
 No maner counseyl, but at hir loke, 840
 But at myn hest ;⁴ for-why, hir eyen.
 So gladly, I trow, myn herte seyen,⁵
 That purely tho myn oun thoght
 Seyde hit were beter serve hir for noght

Arrayed. ² Holy ones, *i. e.*, Apostles. ³ She was unique. ⁴ Vow
 Editors have attempted to make this passage more smooth by reading
 "And at myn hert." It seems to mean, "I was caught so suddenly
 that I took no sort of thought (or advice), but looked at her in th
 ight of my vow, her eyes being the cause." ⁵ Saw.

Than with a-nother to be wel.
And hyt was sothe, for everedel ;
I wil a-noon right telle the why.

" I sawgh hyr daunce so comelely,
Carole and synge so swetly,
Lawghe and pley so womanly, 850
And loke so debonairly,
So goodely speke, and so frendly,
That certes, I trowe that ever-more
Nas seyne so blysfyl a tresore,
For every heere on hir hede,
Soth to seyne, hyt was not rede,
Ne nouthur yelow, ne broune hyt nas,
Me thoghte most lyke gold hyt was.

" And which eyen my lady hadde !
Debonair, goode, glade, and sadde,¹ 860
Symple, of goode mochel, noght to wyde,
Ther-to hir looke nas not a-syde,
Ne overwert,² but besette so wele,
Hyt drewh and tooke up everydele
Al that on hir gan be-holde.
Hir eyen semed anoon she wolde
Have mercy, — foolys wenden soo, —
But hyt was never the rather³ doo ;
Hyt nas no countrefeted thyng,
Hyt was hir oun pure lokynge 870
That the goddesse, dame Nature,
Had made hem opene by mesure,
And cloos ; for were she never so glad

¹ Steadfast. ² Across. ³ Sooner.

Hyr lokyng was not foly sprad,¹
 Ne wildely, thogh that she pleyde ;
 But ever me thoght hir eyen seyde,
 ‘ Be God, my wrathe ys al for-give ! ’

“ Therwith hir lyste so wel to lyve,
 That dulnesse was of hir a-drad.

She nas to sobre, ne to glad.

880

In alle thynges more mesure

Had never, I trowe, creature.

But many oon with hire loke she hert,

And that sate hyr ful lytel at hert,

For she knewe no-thinge of her thoght,

But whither she knew, or knew it nowght,

Algate she ne rought of hem a stree !

To gete hyr love noo nerre was he

That woned at home, than he in Ynde,

The formest was alway behynde.

890

But goode folke, over al other,

She loved as man may do hys brother,

Of whiche love she was wounder large ²

In skilful ³ places that bere charge.

“ But which a visage had she ther-too !

Allas, myn hert ys wonder woo

That I ne kan discryven hyt !

Me lakketh both Englyssh and wit

For to un-do hyt at the fulle,

And eke my spiritis be so dulle

900

So grete a thyng for to devyse.

I have no witte that kan suffise

¹ Dilated foolishly. ² Generous. ³ Reasonable.

To comprehend hir beaute
 But thus moche dar I sayn, that she
 Was white,¹ rody, fressh, and lyvely hewed ;
 And every day hir beaute newed ;
 And negh hir face was alder best,
 For certys, Nature had swich lest
 To make that faire, that trewly she
 Was hir chefe patrone of beaute, 910
 And chefe ensample of al hir werke,
 And mounstre ;² for be hyt never so derke,
 Me thynkyth I se hir ever-moo ;
 And yet, more-over, thogh al thoo
 That ever levede were now a-lyve,
 Ne sholde ha founde to diskryve
 Yn al hir face a wikked sygne ;
 For hit was sad, symple, and benygne.

“ And which a goodely, softe speche
 Had that swete, my lyves leche !³ 920
 So frendely and so wel y-grounded,
 Up al resoun so wel y-founded,
 And so tretable to al goode,
 That I dar swere wel by the Roode,
 Of eloquence was never founde
 So swete a sownynge facounde,⁴
 Ne trewer tonged, ne skorned lasse,
 Ne bet koude hele, that by the masse
 I durste swere, thogh the Pape hit songe,
 That ther was never yet through hir tonge 930

¹ This is presumed to be a reference to the name of the Duchess — *Blanche*. Cf. l. 948. ² Ensample (Latin, *monstrare*). ³ Physician
⁴ Facundity (Fr. *faconde*, eloquent).

Man ne woman gretely harmed,
 As for hit was al harme hyd ;
 Ne lasse flaterynge in hir word,
 That purely hir symple recorde
 Was founde as trewe as any bonde ;
 Or trouthe of any mannys honde.
 Ne chyde she koude never a dele,
 That knoweth al the worlde ful wele.

“ But swiche a fairenesse of a nekke
 Had that swete, that boon nor brekke¹ 940
 Nas ther non seene that mys-satte ;
 Hyt was white, smothe, streght, and pure
 flatte,

Wyth-outen hole, or canel-boon,²
 As be semynge, had she noon.
 Hyr throte, as I have now memoyre,
 Semeð a rounde toure of yvoyre,
 Of goode gretenesse, and noght to grete.

“ And goode, faire, White, she hete,³ —
 That was my lady name ryghte, —
 She was bothe faire and bryghte, 950
 She hadde not hir name wronge.
 Ryght faire shuldres, and body longe,
 She had, and armes every lyth⁴
 Fattyssh flesshy, not grete therwith ;
 Ryght white handes, and nayles rede,
 Rounde brestes, and of good brede⁵
 Hyr hippes were, a streight flat bakke.
 I knewe on hir noon other lakke,

Breach. ² Collar-bone. ³ Was called. ⁴ Member. ⁵ Breadth

That al hir lymmes nere pure sywyng¹,
In as ferre as I had knowynge.

960

“Therto she koude so wel pley,
Whan that hir lyst, that I dar sey
That she was lyke to torche bryght
That every man may take of lyght
Ynogh, and hyt hathe never the lesse.

“Of maner and of comlynesse,
Ryght so ferde my lady dere,
For every wight of hir manere
Myght cache ynogh, gif that he wolde,
Gif he had eyen hir to be-holde ;
For I dar swere wel gif that she
Had amonge ten thousande be,
She wolde have be, at the lest,
A chefe meroure² of al the fest,
Thogh they had stonde in a rowe,
To mennys eyen that koude have knowe.
For wher-so men had pleyed or wakyd,
Me thoght the felysshyppe as naked
Withouten hir, that sawgh I oones,
As a corowne withoute stones.

970

980

‘Trewly she was to myn eye
The soleyne³ fenix of Arabye,
For ther levyth nevyr but oon ;
Ne swich as she ne knowe I noon.

“To speke of godenesse trewly she
Had as moche debonairyete
As ever had Hester⁴ in the Bible,

¹ Following, corresponding
Canterbury Tales, l. 14,080.

² Mirror.

³ One, solitary.

⁴ Cf

And more, gif more were possyble.
 And sothe to seyne, therwyth-alle
 She had a wytte so generalle,
 So hoole enclyned to alle goode,
 That al hir wytte was set, by the Rode,¹
 With-oute malyce upon gladnesse ;
 And ther-to I sawgh never yet a lesse
 Harmeful than she was in doynge.
 I sey nat that she ne had knowynge
 What harme was, or elles she
 Had koude no good, so thenketh me.

990

“ And trewly, for to speke of trouthe,
 But she had hadde, hyt hadde be routhe. 1000
 Therof she had so moche hyr dele,²
 And I dar seyn, and swere hyt wele,
 That Trouthe hym-selfe, over al and alle,
 Had chose hys maner³ principalle
 In hir, that was his restynge-place.
 Ther-to she hadde the moste grace
 To have stedefaste perseveraunce
 And esy, atemptry governaunce,
 That ever I knewe, or wyste yitte,
 So pure, suffraunt, was hir wytte. 1010
 And resoun gladly she understoode ;
 Hyt folowed wel she koude goode.
 She used gladly to do wel :
 These were hir maners everydel.

“ Therwith she loved so wel ryght,
 She wronge do wolde to no wyght ;

¹ Holy-rood (cross). ² Share. ³ Abode.

No wyghte myghte doo hir noo shame,
 She loved so wel hir oun name.
 Hyr lust to holde no wyght in honde,¹
 Ne, be thou siker, she wolde not fonde² 1020
 To holde no wyght in balaunce³
 By halfe worde, ne by countenaunce,
 But gif men wolde upon hir lye;
 Ne sende men in-to Walakye,
 To Pruyse, and in-to Tartarye,
 To Alysaundre, ne in-to Turkye;⁴
 And byd hym faste, anoon, that he
 Goo hoodeles in-to the drye se,
 And come home by the Carrenare;⁵
 And seye, 'Sir, be now ryght ware 1030
 That I may of yow here seyn
 Worshyppe, or that ye come ageyn!'
 She ne used no suche knakkes smale.

"But wherfore that I tel my tale?
 Ryght on thys same, as I have seyde,
 Was hooly al my love leyde,
 For certes, she was tnat swete wife
 My suffisaunce, my luste, my lyfe,
 Myn happe, myn hele, and al my blysse,

¹ Accuse. Cf. *Canterbury Tales*, l. 10,435. ² Try. ³ Suspense.
⁴ Cf. *Canterbury Tales*, ll. 50-60. ⁵ She would not captiously send
 suitors upon dangerous errands to test their constancy, as mediæ-
 val coquettes were wont. It is suggested that "the Carrenare" is
 the dangerous Italian gulf, *Il Quarnero*, the charnel-hole, a by-
 word for danger in Dante's time. Cf. *Inferno*, ix. 113. A writer in
 the *Saturday Review* considers it "without doubt" that the "drye
 se" was the desert of Sahara, and "the Carrenare" the Mountains
 of the Moon, called *Carena*, the *Kapôny* of Ptolemy. It is improb-
 able that Chaucer cared for geographical accuracy in a poem that is
 a fiction and a dream, but the speculations are interesting.

My worldys welfare, and my goddesse, 1040
And I hooly hires, and everydel."

"By oure Lord," quod I, "I trowe yow wel!
Hardely¹ your love was wel besette;
I not² how ye myght have doo bette."

"Bette! ne no wyght so wele," quod he.

"I trowe hyt wel, sir," quod I, "*parde!*"

"Nay, leve³ hyt wel."

"Sire, so do I;

I leve yow wel, that trewely
Yow thoghte that she was the best,
And to be-holde the alderfayrest; 1050
Who soo had loked hir with your eyen" —

"With myn! nay, al that hir seyen
Seyde, and swore, hyt was soo.
And thogh they ne hadde, I wolde thoo
Have loved best my lady free,
Thogh I had hadde al the beaute
Thatt ever had Alcipyades,⁴
And al the strengthe of Ercules,
And therto had the worthynesse
Of Alysaunder, and al the rychesse 1060
That ever was in Babyloyne,
In Cartage, or in Macedoyne,
Or in Rome, or in Nynyve;
And to also as hardy be
As was Ector, so have I joye,
That Achilles slough at Troye, —

¹ Assuredly. ² Know not. ³ Believe. ⁴ Alcibiades.

And ther-fore was he slayn alsoo

In a temple, for bothe twoo

Were slayne, he and Antylegyus,¹

And so seyth Dares Frygius,²

1070

For love of Polixena, —

Or ben as wis as Mynerva,

I wolde ever, withoute drede,

Have loved hir, for I most nede !

" 'Nede ? ' nay, trewly, I gabbe nowe, —

Noght 'nede,' and I wol telle howe,

For of goode wille myn hert hyt wolde,

And eke to love hir I was holde,

As for the fairest and the beste.

" She was as good, so have I reste,

1080

As ever was Penelopee of Grece,

Or as the noble wife Lucrece,

That was the best, — he telleth thus

The Romaine, Tytus Lyvyus, —

She was as good, and no thyng lyke,

Thogh hir stories be autentyke ;

Algate³ she was as trewe as she. ³⁴

" But wherfore that I telle the

Whan I firste my lady say ?

I was ryght yonge, sothe to say,

1090

And ful grete nede I hadde to lerne

Whan my herte wolde yerne

To love, byt was a grete emprise ;

¹ Antilochus, the beautiful son of Nestor. ² The Trojan priest of Vulcan in whose name a popular history of the Fall of Troy, current in the Middle Ages, was written, probably by a Roman, a few centuries after the irruption of the barbarians. Cf. *Troilus and Cryseyde*, i. 146. ³ However.

But as my wytte koude beste suffise,
 After my yonge, childely wytte,
 Withoute drede, I be-sette hytte
 To love hir in my best wyse,
 To do hir worshippe, and the servise
 That I koude thoo, be my trouthe,
 Withoute feynynge, outhur slouthe,
 For wonder feyne I wolde hir se.

1100

“ So mochel hyt amended me,
 That whan I sawgh hir first a morwe,
 I was warshed ¹ of al my sorwe
 Of al day after till hyt were eve ;
 Me thoghte no-thinge myghte me greve,
 Were my sorwes never so smerte ;
 And yet she sytte so in myn herte,
 That by my trouthe, I nolde noght,
 For al thys worlde, oute of my thoght
 Leve my lady, noo, trewly ! ”

1110

“ Now, by my trouthe, sir,” quod I,
 “ Me thynketh ye have suche a chaunce,
 As shryfte wythoute repentaunce.”

“ “ Repentaunce ! ’ nay, fy ! ” quod he,
 “ Shulde I now repente me
 To love ? nay, certis, than were I wel
 Wers than was Achetofel,
 Or Anthenor,² so have I joye,
 The traytore that betrayes Troye,
 Or the fals Genellon,³
 He that purchased the treson
 Of Rowlande and of Olyvere.

1120

¹ Cured. ² Antenor. ³ Cf. *Canterbury Tales*, l. 5806.

Nay, while I am a lyve here
I nyl forgete hir, never moo!"

"Now, good syr," quod I thoo,
"Ye han wel tolde me here-before,
Hyt ys no nede to reherse more
How ye sawgh hir firste, and where;
But wolde ye tel me the manere
To hire which was your first speche, —
Therof I wolde yow be-seche, —
And how she knewe first your thoght,
Whether ye loved hir or noght,
And telleth me eke what ye have lore,¹
I herde yow telle herebefore."

1130

"Yee," he seyde, "thow nost² what thou
menyst ;

I have lost more than thou wenyst."

"What losse ys that?" quod I thoo;

"Nyl she not love yow? ys hyt soo?"

1140

Or have ye oghte doon amys,
That she hathe lefte yow? ys hyt this?
For Goddys love, telle me alle."

"Be-fore God," quod he, "and I shalle.

I say ryght as I have seyde,
On hir was al my love leyde,
And yet she nyste hyt nat never a del
Noght longe tyme, leve³ hyt wel!
For be ryght siker, I durste nōghte,
For al this worlde, te¹ hir my thoghte,
Ne I wolde have wraththed hir trewly.

1150

¹ Lost. ² Knowest not. ³ Believe.

For wostow¹ why? she was lady
 Of the body, — she had the hert,
 And who hath that may not astert.²

“ But, for to kepe me so fro ydelnesse,
 Trewly I did my besynesse
 To make songes, as I best koude ;
 And ofte tyme I songe hem loude,
 And made songes this a grete dele,
 Al thogh I koude not make so wele 1160
 Songes, ne knowe the arte alle,
 As koude Lamekys sone, Tuballe,³
 That founde out firste the art of songe, —
 For as hys brothres hamers ronge
 Upon hys anvelet up and doon
 Therof he tooke the first soon ;
 But Grekes seyn Pictagoras,
 That he the firste fynder was
 Of the arte, *Aurora*⁴ telleth soo ;
 But therof no fors of hem twoo ; 1170
 Algatis, songes thus I made
 Of my felynge, myn hert to glade.
 And loo, thus was alther-first, —
 I not wher⁵ hyt were the first.

Lorde, hyt maketh myn hert lyght
Whan I thenke on that swete wyght
That is so semely on to see,
And wisshe to God hit myght so bee
That she wolde holde me for hir knyght,
My lady that is so faire and bryght ! 1180

¹ Knowest thou. ² Escape. ³ Jubal. ⁴ A metrical version of portions of the Bible. ⁵ Know not whether.

"Now have I tolde the, sothe to say,
My first songe. Upon a day
I be-thoghte me what woo,
And sorwe that I suffred thoo
For hir, and yet she wyst hyt noght,
Ne tel hir durst I nat my thoght.
Allas ! thoght I, I kan no rede ;¹
And but I telle hir I am but dede,
And gif I telle hyr, to sey ryght sothe,
I am a-dred she wol be wrothe.
Allas ! what shal I thanne doo ?

1190

"In this debate I was so woo,
Me thoght myn hert brast a tweyne ;
So at the last, sothe to sayne,
I be-thoghte me that Nature
Ne formed never in creature
So moche beaute, trewely,
And bounte, wyth-oute mercy.

"In hope of that my tale I tolde
With sorwe, as that I never sholde
For nedys ; and, mawgree my hede,
I most have tolde hir or be dede.
I not² wel how that I beganne,
Ful evel reherse hyt I kan,
And eke, as helpe me God, with-alle
I trowe hyt was in the dismalle³
That was the ten woundes⁴ of Egipte,
For many a worde I over-skippe
In my tale, for pure⁵ fere

1200

¹ Know no couns¹, am in a dilemma. ² Know not. ³ Dismal
train. ⁴ Plagues. ⁵ Verv.

Lest my wordys mys-sette were ; 1210
 With sorweful herte, and woundes dede,
 Softe, and quakyng for pure drede
 And shame, and styntyng in my tale
 For ferde, and myn hewe al pale,
 Ful ofte I wexe both pale and rede ;
 Bowyng to hir, I heng the hede,
 I durste nat ones loke hir on,
 For witte, maner, and al was goon.
 I seyde 'Mercy!' and no more.¹
 Hyt nas no game, hyt sate me sore. 1220

"So at the laste, sothe to seyne,
 Whan that myn hert was come ageyne,
 To telle shortely al my speche,
 With hool herte I gan hir beseche
 That she wolde be my lady swete ;
 And swore, and gan hir hertely hete²
 Ever to be stedfast and trewe,
 And love hir alwey fresshly newe,
 And never other lady have,
 And al hir worshippe for to save 1230
 As I best koude, — I swore hir this, —
 'For youres is alle that ever ther ys
 For evermore, myn herte swete !
 And never to false yow, but I mete,³
 I nyl,⁴ as wysse⁵ God help me soo !'

"And whan I had my tale y-doo,
 God wote she accounted nat a stree⁶

¹ Troylus expressed himself in like manner under similar circumstances. Cf. *Troylus and Cryseyde*, iii 98. ² Vow. ³ Dream
 Will not. ⁴ Truly. ⁵ Straw.

Of al my tale, so thoght me.
 To telle shortly, ryght as hyt ys,
 Trewly hir answeare hyt was this ;
 I kan not now wel counterfete
 Hyr wordys, but this was the grete¹
 Of hir answeare : she sade, ‘Nay !’
 Alle outerly, allas ! that day,
 The sorowe I suffred and the woo,
 That trewly Cassandra, that soo
 Bewayled the destruccioun
 Of Troy and of Ilyoun,
 Had never swich sorwe as I thoo.
 I durst no more say ther-too
 For pure fere, but stale away ;
 And thus I lyved ful many a day,
 That trewly, I hadde no nede
 Ferther than my beddes hede,
 Never a day to seche sorwe ;
 I fonde hyt redy every morwe,
 For-why ? I loved hyr in no gere.²

1240

1250

“ So hit befel another yere,
 I thoughte ones I wolde fonde³
 To do hir knowe and understonde
 My woo ; and she wel understode
 That I ne wilned no thyng but gode,
 And worshippe, and to kepe hir name
 Over alle thynges, and dred hir shame,
 And was so besy hyr to serve,
 And pitee were I shulde sterve,⁴
 Syth that I wilned noon harme y-wys.⁵

1260

¹ Sum. ² Bounds. ³ Try ⁴ Die. ⁵ Truly.

"So whan my lady knewe al thys,
 My lady gaf me al hooly
 The noble gifte of hir mercy,
 Savynge hir worshippe by al weyes;
 Dredles,¹ I mene noon other weyes.
 And therwith she gaf me a rynge,
 I trowe hyt was the first thyng;
 But gif myn herte was i-waxe
 Gladde, that is no nede to axe!
 As helpe me God, I was as blyve
 Reysed, as fro dethe to lyve,
 Of al happes the alder-beste,
 The gladdest, and the moste at reste.
 For trewely that swete wyght
 Whan I had wrong and she the ryght,
 She wolde alway so goodely
 For-geve me so debonairely!
 In al my yowthe, in al chaunce
 She tooke me in hir governaunce.

1270

1280

"Therwyth she was alway so trewe
 Our joye was ever y-lyche newe,
 Oure hertys werne so evene a payre
 That never nas² that don contrarye
 To that other, for noo woo;
 For sothe y-lyche they suffred thoo
 Oo blysse, and eke oo sorwe bothe;
 Y-lyche they were bothe glad and wrthe,
 Al was us oon withoute were.³
 And thus we lyved ful many a yere,
 So wel, I kan nat telle how."

1290

¹ In faith. ² Was not. ³ Strife.

"Sir," quod I, "where is she now?"

"Now!" quod he, and stynte anoon.

Therwith he waxe as dede as stoon 1300

And seyde, "Allas, that I was bore!

That was the losse, that here-before

I tolde the that I hadde lorne;

Bethenke howe I seyde herebeforne;

Thow wost ful lytel what thou menyst;

I have lost more than thow wenyst!

God wote, alas! ryght that was she."

"Allas! sir, how? what may that be?"

"She ys ded!"

"Nay!"

"Yis, be my trouthe!"

"Is that youre losse? be God, hyt ys routhe!"

And with that worde ryght anoon 1311

They gan to strake¹ forth; al was doon

For that tyme, the herte huntynge.

With that me thoght that this kynge²

Gan homewarde for to ryde,

Unto a place was there besyde,

Which was from us but a lyte;

A longe castel with wallys white

Be Seynt Johan! on a ryche hill,³

As me mette, but thus hyt fille. 1320

Ryght thus me mette, as I yow telle,

That in the castell ther was a belle,

¹ Proceed. ² Cf. l. 368. Supposed to represent Edward III
Supposed to refer to Windsor Castle.

As hyt hadde smyte oures twelve ;
 Therewyth I a-wooke my selve
 And fonde me lyinge in my bedde ;
 And the booke that I hadde redde,
 Of Alchione and Seys the kyng,
 And of the goddys of slepyng,
 I fond hyt in myn honde ful evene.

Thoght I, "Thys ys so queynt a swevene,
 That I wol, be processe of tyme, 1331
 Fonde¹ to put this swevene in ryme
 As I kan best, and that anoon."
 This was my swevene ; now hit ys doon !

THE PARLEMENT OF FOULES.

*Here begynnyth the Parlement of Foulys. The
 Proem.*

THE lyf so short, the craft so longe to lerne,²
 Thassay so sharp, so hard the conquerynge,
 The dredful joye, alwey that slit³ so yerne ;⁴
 Al this mene I be love, that myn felynge
 A-stonyeth with his wondyrful werkynge
 So sore y-wis, that whan I on hym thynke
 Nat wot I wel wher⁵ that I flete⁶ or synke.

For al be that I knowe nat Love in dede,
 Ne wot how that he quitith folk here hyre,
 Yit happith me ful ofte in bokis reede 10
 Of hise myraklis and his crewel yre,

¹ Try. ² Cf. Longfellow's *Psalm of Life*. The aphorism is from Hippocrates, 'Ο βίος βραχύς, ἡ δὲ τέχνη μακρὴ ; in Latin, *Ars longa vita brevis*. ³ Slideth. ⁴ Rapidly. ⁵ Whether. ⁶ Float.

That rede ¹ I wel he wele be lord and syre ;
 I dar nat seyn, his strokis been so sore,
 But God save swich a lord ! I sey na moore.

Of usage, what for lust and what for lore,
 On bokis rede I ofte, as I yow tolde.
 But wherfore that I speke al this ? Nat yoore
 Agon, it happede me for to be-holde
 Up-on a bok was wrete with letteris olde,
 And ther-upon, a certeyn thing to lerne, 20
 The longe day ful faste I redde and yerne.²

For oute of olde feldys, as men sey,
 Comyth al this newe corn from yer to yere ;
 And out of olde bokis, in good fey,
 Comyth al this newe science that men lere.
 But now to purpos as of this matere, —
 To rede forth so gan me to delite,
 That al that day me thoughte but a lyte.

This bok, of which I make mencion,
 Entytlt was al thus as I schal telle, 30
 "Tullyus, of the Drem of Scipion."³
 Chapiteris sevene it hadde of hevene and helle
 And erthe, and soulis that thereynne dwelle,
 Of whiche, as shortly as I can it trete,
 Of his centence I wele yow seyn the greete.⁴

Fyrst, tellith it, whan Scipion was come
 In Affrik, how he mette Massynisse ⁵
 That hym for joie in armys hath i-nome.

¹ Infer, interpret. ² Eagerly. ³ Cicero's treatise, *Somnium Scipionis*, upon which Macrobius wrote a Latin commentary, very popular in mediæval times. See Longfellow's *Dante* (1 vol. ed.), v 228, for a translation. ⁴ Sum. ⁵ King of Numidia.

Thanne tellyth he here speche, and of the
blysse

That was be-twixt hem til the day gan mysse,
And how his auncestre, Affryan so deere, 41
Gan in his slep that nyght to hym a-pere.

Thanne tellith it, that from a sterry place,
How Affryan hath hym Cartage shewid,
And warnede hym be-forn of al his grace,
And seyde, what ¹ man lernyd other lewid
That lovede comoun profyt, wel i-thewid,²
He shulde in-to a blysfyl place wende,
There as joye is that last with-outyn ende.

Thanne axede he if folk that here been dede
Han lyf and dwellynge in a-nothir place. 51
And Affryan seyde, "Ye, with outyn drede,"
And that oure present worldis lyvys space
Nys but a maner deth, what weye we trace,
And rightful folk schul gon aftyr they deye
To hevene; and schewede hym the Galaxye.

Thanne shewede he hym the lytel erthe that
here is, —

At regard of the hevenys quantite, —
And after shewede he hym the nyne speris,
And aftyr that the melodye herde he 60
That comyth of thilke speris thryes thre,
That welles of musik ben and melodye
In this world here, and cause of armonye.³

¹ Whatever. ² Well-mannered. ³ Referring to the Pythagorean doctrine of the harmony of the spheres. See Longfellow's lines *The Occultation of Orion*, where the idea is enlarged upon, and *Merchant of Venice*, act v., sc. 1, l. 62.

Than bad he hym, syn erthe was so lyte,¹
 And ful of torment and of harde grace,
 That he ne schulde hym in the world delyte.
 Thanne tolde he hym in certeyn yeris space
 That every sterre shulde come in-to his place
 Ther it was ferst, and al schulde out of mynde
 That in this world is don of al mankynde. 70

Thanne preyede hym Scipion to telle hym al
 The weye to come in-to that hevene blis ;
 And he seyde, " Know thyn self ferst immortal,
 And loke ay besyly thow werche and wysse
 To comoun profit, and thow shalt not mysse
 To comyn swiftly to this place deere
 That ful of blysse is and of soulys cleere.

" But brekeris of the lawe, soth to seyn,
 And lykerous folk, aftyr that they ben dede,
 Schul whirle a-boute the erthe alwey in peyne,
 Tyl manye a world be passid, out of drede, 81
 And that for-gevyn is hir weked dede ;
 Than shal they come in-to that blysful place,
 To whiche to comyn God synden us grace ! "

The day gan failen, and the derke nyght,
 That revith bestis from here besynesse,²
 Berafte me myn bok for lak of lyght,
 And to my bed I gan me for to dresse,
 Fulfylde of thought and busy hevynesse ;
 For bothe I hadde thynges that I nolde. 90
 And ek I ne hadde thynges that I wolde.

¹ Small. Cf. *Troilus and Cryseyde*, v. 1829. ² Mr. Longfellow points out the resemblance of ll. 85, 86 to Dante's *Inferno*, ii. 1-3.

But fynally, myn spirit at the laste,
 For-wery¹ of myn labour al the day,
 Toke reste, that made me to slepe faste ;
 And in myn slepe I mette,² as that I lay,
 How Affrican ryght in the same a-ray
 'That Scipion hym say by-fore that tyde
 Was come and stod right at myn bedis syde.

The very hunttere, slepynge in his bed,
 To wode a-gen his mynde goth a-non ; 100
 The juge dremyth how hise pleis been sped ;
 The cartere dremyth how his carte is gon ;
 The riche of gold ; the knyght fyght with his
 fon ;³

The syke met he drynkyth of the tunne ;
 The love-re met he hath his lady wonne.

I can nat seyn if that the cause were
 For I hadde red of Affrican by-foren,
 That made me to mete that he stod there,
 But thus seyde he : " Thow hast the so wel born
 In lokyng of myn olde bok to torn, 110
 Of whiche Macrobye roughte nat a lyte,
 'That sumdel of thyn labour wolde I quyte."

Invocation.

Cytherea,⁴ thow blysfyl lady swete,
 That with thyn ferbrond dauntist whom thow
 lest,

¹ Very weary. ² Dreamed. ³ Foes. ⁴ Aphrodite or Venus
 named from the town in Crete, or from the island Cythera. Cf
Canterbury Tales, l. 2215.

And madist me this swevene for to mete,
 Be thow myn helpe in this, for thow mayst best,
 As wisely¹ as I seye² the north north west,
 Whan I be-gan myn swevene for to write ;
 So gif me myght to ryme and ek tendyte.

The Story.

This forseyyde Affrican me hente a non, 120
 And forth-with hym unto a gate me broughte
 Ryght of a park wallid of grene ston ;
 And ovyr the gate with letteris large i-wrowht
 There were verses i-wrete as me thought,
 On eythir syde of ful gret difference,
 Of which I schal now seyn the pleyyn sentence.

*Thorgh me men gon in-to that blysfyl place
 Of hertis hele and dedly woundis cure ;
 Thorgh me men gon un-to the welle of grace
 Theere grene and lusty May shal evere endure ;
 This is the weye to al good aventure ; 131
 Be glad, thow redere and thyn sorwe out caste.
 Al opyn am I, passe in and sped the faste !*

*Thorgh me men gon, than spak that othir side,
 Unto the mortal strokis of the spere
 Of whiche disdayn and daunger is the gyde,
 There nevere tre shal freut ne levys bere.
 This strem yow ledith to the sorweful were³
 There as the fisch in prysoun is al drye ;
 Theschewyng is only the remedye. 140*

¹ Truly. ² Saw. ³ Fishpond

These vers of gold and blak i-wretyn were,
 Of whiche I gan a-stonyd to be-holde ;
 For-whi? That on encresede ay myn fere,
 And with that othir gan myn herte bolde.¹
 That on me hette, that othir dede me colde ;²
 No wit hadde I, for errour, for to chese
 To entre or flen ; or me to save or lese.

Right as be-twixsyn adamauntis two
 Of evene myght a pece of yryn set,
 Ne hath no myght to meve too ne fro, — 150
 For what that on may hale that othir let, —
 Ferde³ I, that nyste whethir me was best
 To entre or leve, til Affrycan, myn gide,
 Me hente, and shof in at the gatis wide.

And seyde, “ It stante writyn in thyn face
 Thyn errour, though thou telle it not to me,
 But dred the not to come in-to this place,
 For this writyng nys no thyng ment bi the,
 Ne by non, but he Lovys servaunt be,
 For thou of love hast lost thyn taste, I gesse,
 As sek man hath of swete and byttrnesse. 161

“ But natheles, al-thow that thou be dul,
 Yit that thou canst not do, yit mayst thou se,
 For manye a man that may nat stonde a pul,
 It likyth hym at wrastelyng for to be,
 And demyn yit wher⁴ he do bet or he ;
 And, there if thou hast cunnyng for tendite,
 I shal the shewe mater for to wryte.”

With that myn hand he tok in his a-non,

Grow bold. ² Caused me to grow cold. ³ Fared. ⁴ Whether

Of whiche I confort kaughte, and that as faste ;
But Lord ! so I was glad and wel begoon ! 171
For overal where that I myn eyen caste
Were treis clad with levys that ay shal laste,
Eche in his kynde, of colour frosch and greene
As emeroude, that joye it was to seene.

The byldere ok and ck the hardy assh ;
The pilere elm, the cofere unto carayne ;¹
The boxtre pipere ;² holm to whippis lasch ;
The saylynge fyr ; the cipresse, deth to pleyne ;
The shetere³ ew ; the asp for shaftys pleyne ;
The olyve of pes, and ek the dronke vyne ; 181
The victor palm, the laurer to devyne.

A gardyn saw I ful of blospemy⁴ bowys
Up-on a river in a grene mede,
There as ther swetnesse everemore i-now is ;
With flouris white, blewe, and yelwe, and rede,
And colde welle-stremys no-thing dede,
That swemyn ful of smale fischis lite,
With fynnys rede and skalis sylvyr bryghte.

On every bow the bryddis herde I synge,
With voys of aungel in here armonye ; 191
Som besyede hem here bryddis forth to brynge.
The litele conyes to here pley gunne hye ;
And ferthere al aboute I gan aspye
The dredful⁵ ro, the buk and hert and hynde,
Squyrelis and bestis smale of gentil kynde.

¹ Corpses. ² Cf. *Canterbury Tales*, l. 9010. ³ Shooter yew, of which bows were made. Cf. *Faerie Queen*, canto 1, stanzas 8, 9.

⁴ Blooming. The following lines, to line 294, are essentially reproduced from the *Teseide* of Boccaccio, book vii., stanzas 51-66.

Timid.

Of instreumentis of strengis in a-cord
 Herde I so pleye a ravyshyng swetnesse,
 That God, that makere is of al, and Lord,
 Ne herde nevere betyr, as I gesse ; 200
 Therwith a wynd, onethe¹ it myght be lesse,
 Made in the levys grene a noyse softe,
 Acordaunt to² the bryddis song a lofte.

The aire of that place so attempre was
 That nevere was grevaunce of hot ne cold ;
 There wex ek every holsum spice and gras ;
 Ne no man may there waxe sek ne old,
 Yit was there joye more a thousent fold
 Than man can telle ; ne nevere wolde it nyghte,
 But ay cler day to ony manys syghte. 210

Undyr a tre be-syde a welle, I say
 Cupide oure lord hise arwis forge and file ;
 And at his fet his bowe al redy lay,
 And wel his doughtyr temperede al this whyle
 The hevedis³ in the welle ; and with hire wile
 She couchede hem aftyr⁴ they shulde serve,
 Some for to sle and some to wounde and kerve.

Tho was I war of Plesaunce a-non ryght,
 And of Aray and Lust and Curteysie,
 And of the Craft that can and hath the myght
 To don⁵ be force a wight to don folye ; 221
 Disfigurat was she, I nyl nat lye ;
 And by hym-self undyr an ok I gesse,
 Saw I Delyt that stod with Gentilesse.

¹ Scarcely. ² In harmony with. ³ Heads. ⁴ Arranged them as
 nat. Cf. *Canterbury Tales*, l. 17,552, etc. ⁵ Cause.

I saw Beute, with-outyn ony a-tyr ;
 And Youthe, ful of game and jolyte ;
 Fool-hardynesse and Flaterye and Desyr,
 Messagerye and Meede and other thre, —
 Here namys shal not here be told for me, —
 And up-on pileris greeete of jasper longe, 230
 I saw a temple of bras i-founded stronge.

Aboute that temple daunsedyn alwey
 Wemen i-nowe, of whiche some ther weere
 Fayre of hem-self, and some of hem were gay ;
 In kertelis al dischevele wente they there, —
 That was here offys alwey, yer be yeere, —
 And on the temple of dovis white and fayre
 Saw I syttynge manye an hunderede peyre.

By-fore the temple dore, ful sobyrlly,
 Dame Pes sat with a curtyn in hire hond, 240
 And by hire syde, wondyr discretly,
 Dame Pacience syttynge there I fond
 With face pale, up-on an hil of sond ;¹
 And aldirnext with-inne and ek with-oute,
 Byheste and Art, and of here folk a route.

With-inne the temple, of sykys² hoote as fuyr
 I herde a swow³ that gan a-boute renne ;
 Whiche sikis were engenderede with desyr
 That madyn every auter for to brenne
 Of newe flaume ; and wel espyed I thenne 250
 That alle the cause of sorwe that they drye⁴
 Cam of the bittere goddesse Jelosye.

¹ Still patient, though in adverse circumstances. ² Sighs. ³ Confused noise. ⁴ Suffered (O. E. *dreogan*).

The god Priapus saw I as I wente
 With-inne the temple, in sovereyn place stonde
 In swich aray as whan the asse hym shente,¹
 With cri be nyghte, and with septure in his
 honde.

Ful besyly men gunne asaye and fonde²
 Up-on his hed to sette of sundery hewe
 Garlondis ful of flourrys frosche and newe.

And in a prive corner in desport 260
 Fond I Venus³ and hire porter Richesse
 That was ful noble and hautayn of hyre port;
 Derk was that place, but aftyrward lightnesse
 I saw a lyte,⁴ — unnethe⁵ it myghte be lesse, —
 And on a bed of gold sche lay to reste
 Tyl that the hote sunne gan to weste.

Hyre gilte heris with a goldene thred
 I-bounden were, untrussede⁶ as sche lay,
 And nakyd from the brest up to the hed 269
 Men myghthe hyre sen; and sothly for to say,
 The remenaunt was wel keverede to myn pay,⁷
 Ryght with a subtyl covercheif of Valence,⁸
 Ther nas no thikkere cloth of no defense.

The place gaf a thousent savouris sote,
 And Bacus, god of wyn, sat hire be-syde,
 And Sereis⁹ next, that doth of hungir boote;⁷
 And as I seyde a-myddis lay Cypride,¹⁰
 To wham, on kneis two, yonge folk there cryede

¹ Discomfited, as related by Ovid. See the *Fasti*, book i. ² Try
 The Cambridge MS. (Gg. 4, 27) has Feby (Phœbe, Diana). ⁴ Lit
 tie. ⁵ Scarcely. ⁶ Ungirded. ⁷ Satisfaction. ⁸ A thin drapery
 Ceres, goddess of plenty. ¹⁰ Aphrodite, or Venus, was known
 also as Cypria, Cypris, etc., from Cyprus, the place of her birth.

To ben here helpe ; but thus I let hem lye,
 And ferther in the temple I gan espie, 280
 That, in dispit of Dyane the chaste,
 Ful manye a bowe i-broke ¹ hyng on the wal,
 Of maydenys swiche as gunne here tymys waste
 In hyre servyse. I-peyntede were overal
 Ful manye a story of whiche I touche shal
 A fewe, as of Calyxte and Athalante,²
 And manye a mayde of which the name I
 wante :

Semyramus, Candace ³ and Hercules,
 Biblis,⁴ Dido, Thisbe, and Pirus,
 Tristram, Isoude, Paris, and Achilles, 290
 Elyne, Cliopatre, and Troylus,
 Silla,⁵ and ek the modyr of Romulus, —
 Alle these were peyntid on that othir syde,
 And al here love and in what plyt they deyde.

Whan I was come a-gen un-to the place
 That I of spak,⁶ that was so sote and grene,
 Forth welk I tho myn-selvyn to solace.
 Tho was I war wher that ther sat a queene
 That as of lyght the someris sunnys shene
 Passith the sterre, right so overmesure 300
 She fayrere was than ony creature.

And in a launde ⁷ up-on an hil of flouris

¹ Trophies of Venus. ² Callisto and Atalanta. Cf. *Canterbury Tales*, l. 2070. ³ Canace, daughter of Æolus. ⁴ MS. Ff. Camb. has Fillis (Phyllis, daughter of Lycurgus) who loved Demophoon. Biblis, for her unnatura^l love of her brother, was transformed into a fountaine. See Ovid, *Ars Amatoria*, book i.; and *Metamorphoses*, book ix. ⁵ There were two Scyllas. One loved Minos; but the text probably means she who was turned by Circe into a sea-monster. ⁶ Cf. l. 172 ⁷ Lawn.

Was set this noble goddesse Nature.
 Of braunchis were here hallis and here bouris
 I-wrought after here cast and here mesuris ;
 Ne there was foul that comyth of engendrure,
 That they ne were al prest¹ in here presence,
 To take hire dom and geve hire audyence.

For this was on Seynt Volantynys day,
 Whan every bryd comyth there to chese his
 make, 31c

Of every kynde that men thynke may ;
 And that so heuge a noyse gan they make,
 That erthe and eyr and tre and every lake
 So ful was, that onethe was there space
 For me to stonde, so ful was al the place.

And right as Aleyn,² in the Pleynt of Kynde,
 Devyseth Natur in aray and face ;
 In swich aray men myghte hire there fynde.
 This nobil emperesse, ful of grace,
 Bad every foul to take his owene place, 32c
 As they were wonyd alwey from yer to yeere
 Seynt Volantynys day to stondyn theere.

That is to seyn, the foulis of ravyne
 Were heyest set, and thanne the foulis smale,
 That etyn as hem nature wolde enclyne,
 As werm or thyng, of which I telle no tale ;
 And watyr-foul sat loweste in the dale,
 But foul that lyvyth be sed sat on the grene,
 And that so fele³ that wondyr was to sene.

¹ Ready. ² Alain de Lille (Alanus de Insulis), the "Universa Doctor," who lived in France in the twelfth century, wrote *De Placitu Naturæ* (Concerning the Complaint of Nature). ³ Many.

There myghte men the ryal egle fynde, 330
 That with his sharpe lok persith the sunne ;
 And others eglis of a lowere kynde,
 Of whiche that clerkis wel devyse cunne ;
 Ther was the tiraunt with his federys dunne
 And grey, I mene the goshauk that doth pyne ¹
 To bryddis for his outrageous ravyne ;²

The gentyl facoun ³ that with his feet dis-
 traynyth ⁴

The kyngis hand ; the hardy sperhauk eke,
 The quaylis foo ; the merilioun ⁵ that paynyth
 Hym-self ful ofte the larke for to seke ; 340
 There was the douve, with hire eyen meke ;
 The jelous swan, a-gens hire deth that syngith ;
 The oule ek, that of deth the bode ⁶ bryngyth ;

The crane geaunt, with his trompis soun ;
 The thef the chough, and ek the jangelynge pye ;
 The skornynge jay ; the elis fo, heroun ;
 The false lapwyng, ful of trecherye ;
 The starlyng, that the conseyll can be-wreye ;
 The tame rodok,⁷ and the coward kyte ;
 The kok, that orloge is of thorpis lyte ; 350

The sparwe, Venus sone ; the nyhtyngale,
 That clepith forth the grene levys newe ;
 The swalwe, morthere of the bees smale,
 That makyn hony of flouris frosche of hewe ;
 The wedded turtill, with hire herte trewe ,
 The pokok, with his aungelis clothis bryghte ;
 The fesaunt, skornere of the cok be nyghte ;

¹ Pain. ² Rapine. ³ Cf. *Canterbury Tales*, l. 15,204. ⁴ Grasp
 th. ⁵ Merlin. ⁶ Omen. ⁷ Robin redbreast.

The wakyр goos ; the cokkow most onkynde ;
 The popynjay, ful of delicasye ;
 The drake, stroyere of his owene kynde ; 360
 The stork, the wrekere of a-vouterye ;¹
 The hote cormeraunt ful of glotenye ;
 The raven wys ; the crowe, with vois of care ;
 The thurstil old ;² the frosty feldefare.³

What shulde I seyn ? Of foulys every kynde
 That in this world hath federis and stature,
 Men myghtyn in that place assemblede fynde
 By-fore the noble goddesse Nature ;
 And everiche of hem dede his besy cure
 Benygnelly to chese or for to take 370
 By hire a-cord his formel or his make.⁴

But to the poynt, — Nature held on hire hond
 A formele egle, of shap the gentilleste
 That evere she a-mong hire werkis fond ;
 The moste benygne and the goodlieste ;
 In hire was everi vertu at his reste
 So fer forth, that Nature hire-selfe hadde blysse
 To loke on hire and ofte hire bek to kysse.

Nature, vicarye of the almyghty Lord, 379
 That hot, cold, hevy, lyghte, moyst, and dreye
 Hath knyt, with evene noumberis of a-cord,⁵
 In esy voys gan for to speke and seye,
 " Foulis, take hed of myn centence, I preye,
 And, for yore ese in fortheryng of youre nede,
 As faste as I may speke I wele yow speede.

¹ Adultery. ² Long-lived thrush. ³ A migratory bird of the thrush tribe, which visits England in the season of frost. ⁴ Female or mate ⁵ In proper proportion.

“Ye knowe wel how Seynt Volantynys day,
By myn statute and thorgh myn governaunce,
Ye come for to cheese — and fle youre wey —
Youre makis, as I prike yow with plesaunce ;
But natheles myn ryghtful ordenaunce 390
May I nat breke for al this world to wynne,
That he that most is worthi shal begynne.

“The terslet¹ egle, as that ye knowe ful wel,
The foul ryal, a-bovyn every degre,
The wyse and worthi, secre, trewe as stel,
Whiche I have formyd as ye may wel se
In every part as it best likyth me, —
It nedith not his shap yow to devyse, —
He shal ferst schese and spekyn in his gyse.

“And aftyr hym by ordere shul they chese,
Aftyr youre kynde, everich as ye lykyth, 401
And as youre hap is shul ye wynne or lese ;
But which of yow that love most entrikyth²
God synde hym hire that sorest for him sykyth.”
And therwithal the tersel gan she calle,
And seyde, “Myn sone, the choys is to yow falle.

“But natheles, in this condicioun
Mot be the choys of everich that is heere.
That she a-gre to his eleccioun
Who-so he be that shulde be hire feere ;³ 410
This is oure usage alwey from yer to yeere,
And who-so may at this tyme have his grace,
In blissful tyme he cam into this place.”

With hed enclyned and with humble cheere

Male (tercel). ² Entangleth (Fr. *intriguer*). ³ Companion.

This ryal tersel spak, and tariede nōght :

“Un-to myn sovereyn lady, and not myn fere,
I chose and chese, with wil and herte and
thought,

The formel on youre hond, so wel i-wrought,
Whos I am al and evere wele hire serve,
Do what hire lest, to do me leve or sterve,¹ 420

“Besekynge hire of merci and of grace,
As she that is myn lady sovereyne ;
Or let me deye present in this place ;
For certis, longe I may nat lyve in payne,
For in myn herte is korvyn² every veyne ;
And havynge only reward³ to myn trouthe,
Myn deere herte have of myn wo sum routhe !

“And if that I to hyre be found untrewē,
Disobeysaunt, or wilful negligent,
Avauntour, or in proces love a-newe, 430
I preye to yow this be myn jugement,
That with these foulis be I al to-rent,
That ilke day that evere she me fynde
To hire untrue, or in myn gilt unkynde.

“And, syn that hire lovyth non so wel as I,
Al be it that she me nevere of love be-heette,⁴
Thanne ouhte she be myn thurgh hire mercy,
For othir bond can I non on hire areete ;⁵
Ne nevere for no wo ne shal I lette 439
To servyn hire, how fer so that she wende ;
Say what yow leste, myn tale is at an ende.”

Ryght as the frosshe, rede rose newe

¹ Live or die. ² Wounded. ³ Regard. ⁴ Promised. ⁵ Impute

A-gen the somyr sunne coloured is,
 Ryght so, for shame, al wexen gan the hewe
 Of this forme¹, whan she herde al this.
 She neythir answerde "Wel," ne seyde a mys,
 so sore a-basht was she, tyl that Nature
 Seyde, "Doughter, drede nought, I yow assure."

A nothir tersel egle spak a-non,
 Of lower kynde, and seyde, "That shal nat be I
 I love hir bet than ye don, be Seynt Jon! 451
 Or at the leste I love as wel as ye,
 And longere have servyd hire in myn degre;
 And if she shulde a loved for long lovyng,
 To me fullonge hadde be the gerdonyng.

"I dar ek seyn, if she me fynde fals,
 Unkynde, or jangelere, or rebel ony wyse,
 Or gelous, do me hangyn by the hals;²
 And, but I bere me in hire servyse
 As wel as that myn wit can me suffyse, 460
 From poynt in poynt hyre honour for to save,
 Tak the myn lif and al the good I have."

The thredde tercel egle answerde tho,
 'Now, sires, ye seen the lytil leyser³ heere,
 For every foul cryeth out to ben a-go
 Forth with his mak, or with his lady deere,
 And ek Nature hire-self ne wele not heere,
 For taryng here, not half that I wolde seye,
 And but I speke I mot for sorwe deye.

"Of long servyse avante I me nothing 470
 That possible is to me to deye to-day

¹ Female. ² Neck. ³ Leisure for long talk.

For wo, as he that hath ben languyssynge
 This twenty yeer, and as wel happyn may
 A man may servyn bet and more to pay¹
 In half a yer, althogh it were no moore
 Than sum man doth that hath servyd ful yooore

“ I sey not this by me, for I ne can
 Don non servyse that may myn lady plese ;
 But I dar seyn I am hire treweste man,²
 As to myn dom, and fayneste wolde hire ese ;
 At shorte wordis, — til that deth me sese ; 481
 I wele ben heris where³ I wake or wyne,
 And trewe in al that herte may bethynke.”

Of al myn lyf syn that day I was born
 So gentil ple in love or othir thyng
 Ne herde nevere no man me be-forn,
 Who so hadde leyser and cunnyng
 For to reherse hyre cher and hire spekyng :
 And from the morwe⁴ gan this speche laste
 Tyi downward drow the sunne wondir faste.

The noyse of foulis for to ben delyvered 491
 So loude ronge, “ Have don and lat us wende ! ”
 That wel wende I the wode hadde al to-slyvered.
 “ Cum of ! ” they criedyn, “ alas, ye wele us
 shende !

Whan shal youre cursede pletynge havyn an
 ende ?

How shulde a juge eythir partie leve⁵
 I'or ye or nay, with-outyn othir preve ? ”

¹ Satisfaction. ² Liege. ³ Whether. ⁴ Morning. ⁵ Believe
 The terms “ plea,” “ judge,” etc., are borrowed from the phraseology
 of the mediæval Courts of Love.

The goos, the cokkow, and the doke also,
So cryede, “Kek, kek!” “Kokkow!” “Quek,
quek!” on hye,¹ 499

That thurgh myne erys the noyse wente tho.
The goos seyde, “Al this nys not worth a flye!
But I can shappe herof a remedie,
And I wele seye myn verdit fayre and swythe,²
For watyr-foul, who-so be wroth or blythe.”

“And I for werm foul!” quod the fol kok-
kowe;

“And I wele of myn owene autorite,
For comun profit, tak on, — no charg howe, —
For to delyvere us is gret charite.”

“Ye may abyde a while yit, *perde!*”

Quod the turtill, “if it be youre wille 510
A wight may speke, hym were as fayr ben
style.”³

“I am a sed-foul, on the onworthieste,
That wot I wel, and litil of cunnyng,
But bet is that a wyhtis tunge reste,
Than entirmetyn hym of suche doinge
Of which he neythir rede can, ne fynde;⁴
And who-so doth, ful foule hym self a-cloyith,⁵
For offys uncommytted⁶ ofte a-noyeth.”

Nature, which that alwey hadde an ere
To murmur of the lewedenesse, blynde, 520
With facound⁷ voyse seyde, “Hold youre
tungis there!

¹ In a loud tone. ² Speedily. ³ When it were as well, perhaps, that he were still. ⁴ Knows counsel nor finds any. ⁵ Burdeneth. ⁶ Not assig_{ned}. ⁷ Eloquent.

And I shal sone, I hope, a conseil fynde,
Yow to delyvere, and from this noyse unbynde
I juge on every flok men shul on calle¹
To seyn the verdit for yow foullys alle."

Assentid were to this conclusioun
The briddis alle, and foulis of ravyne
Han chosyn fyrst, by playn eleccioun,
The terselet of the facoun, to diffyne
Al here centence as hem leste to termyne;²
And to Nature hym gunne to presente, 531
And she acceptyth hym with glad entente.

The terslet seyde then in this manere :
"Ful hard were it to prove by resoun
Who lovyth best this gentil formehe heere,
For everych hath swich replicacioun³
That non by skillis⁴ may been brought a-doun,
I can not se that argumentis avayle ;
Thanne semyth it there muste be batayle."

"Al redy!" quod thise eglis tercels tho. 540
"Nay, sires," quod he, "if that I durste it seye
Ye don me wrong, myn tale is not i-do,
For, sires, ne takith not a-gref, I preye,
It may not gon as ye wolde in this weye ;
Oure is the voys that han the charg on honde,
And to the jugis dom ye motyn stonde ;

"And therfore, pes ! I seye ; as to myn wit,
Me wolde thynke how that the worthiest
Of knyghthod, and lengest hath used it,

¹ Select one. ² Determine. ³ The plaintiff's answer to his opponent's plea. ⁴ Reasons (O. E. *scylan*, to distinguish).

Most of estat, of blod the gentilleste, 550
 Were sittynge¹ for hire, if that her leste,
 And of these thre she wot hire-self, I trowe,
 Whiche that he be, for hire is light² to knowe.”

The watyr-foulis han here hedis leid
 To gedere, and of a short avysement,
 Whan everryche hadde his large gole³ seyde,
 They seydyn sothly, al be on assent,
 How that “the goos, with hire facounde so gent,⁴
 That so desyrith to pronounce oure nede,
 Shal telle oure tale,” and preyede God hire
 spede. 560

As for these watyr-foulis tho began
 The goos to speke, and in hire kakelynge
 She seyde, “Pes! now tak kep every man,
 And herkenyth which a resoun I shal brynge;
 Myn wit is sharp, I love no tarynge;
 I seye, I rede hym, thow he were myn brothir,
 But she wele love hym let hym take a-nothir.”

“Lo, here a perfit resoun of a goos!”
 Quod the sperhauke, “nevere mot she the!⁵
 Lo, sich it is to have a tunge loos! 570
 Now *perde*, fol, now were it bet for the
 Han holde thyn pes, than shewe thyn nysete!⁶
 It lyth nat in his witte, ne in his wille,
 But soth is seyde, a fol can not ben stille.”

The laughtere aros of gentil⁷ foulis alle,
 And right a-non the sed-fouli chosyn hade

¹ Most becoming. ² Easy. ³ Full purpose (O. E. *gol*, a song; Latin, *gula*, the throat, gullet). ⁴ Eloquence so well bred. ⁵ Thrive
⁶ Foolishness. ⁷ Well-born.

The turtle trewe, and gunne hire to hem calle,
 And preyede hire for to seyn the sothe sadde¹
 Of this matere, and axsede what she radde.²

And she answerde, that pleylnly hire entente
 She wolde it shewe, and sothly what she mente.

“Nay, God forbede, a love-re shulde chaunge!”

The turtle seyde, and wex for shame red; 583

“Thow that his lady evere more be straunge,
 Yit lat hym serve hire til that he be ded.

Forsothe I preyse nat the gosis red,³

For thow sche deyede I wolde non othir make,
 I wele ben hire til that the deth me take!”

“Wel bordit,”⁴ quod the doke, “by myn hat!
 That men shul lovyn alwey, causeles, 590

Who can a resoun fynde, or wit in that?

Daunsith he murye that is myrtheles?

What shulde I rekke of hym that is recheles?

Kek, kek!” yit seith the doke, ful wel and fayre,

“There been mo sterres, God wot, than a
 payre!”

“Now fye, cherl!” quod the gentil terselet,

“Out of the donghil cam that word ful right,

Thou canst nat seen what thyng is wel be-set;

Thow farst by love as oulys don by lyght,

The day hem blent, but wel they sen be nyght.

Thyn kynde is of so low a wrechednese, 601

That what love is thow canst nat seen ne gese.”

Tho gan the kokkow put hym forth in pres⁵

For foul that etith werm, and seyde blythe,

Sober. ² Advised. ³ Advice. ⁴ Jested. ⁵ The crowd.

“So I,” quod he, “may have myn make in pes
 I reche nat how longe that ye stryve ;
 Lat eche of hem ben soleyn ¹ al here lyve ;
 This is myn red, syn they may nat a-corde,
 This shorte lessoun nedith nat recorde.” 609

“Ye, ‘have the glotoun fild i-now his paunche,
 Thanne are we wel,’ ” seyde thanne a merlioun ; ²
 “Thow mortherere of the heysoge ³ on the
 braunche
 That broughte the forth ! thow reufulles ⁴ glotoun !

Leve thow soleyn, werme corrupcioun !
 For no fors is of lak of thyn nature ! ⁵
 Go, lewed be thow, while that the world may
 dure ! ”

“Now pes,” quod Nature, “I comaunde here !
 For I have herd al youre opynyoun,
 And in effect yit be we nevere the nere ;
 But fynally, this is myn conclusioun, — 620
 That she hire-self shal han the eleccioun
 Of whom hire lest, who so be wroth or blythe,
 Hym that she chesith, he shal hire han as
 swithe ;

“For syn it may not here discussid be
 Who lovyth hire best, as seyth the terselet,
 Thanne wele I don hire this favour, that she
 Sha! han right hym on whom hire herte is set.

¹ Single. ² Merlin. ³ Hedge-sparrow. Cf. l. 358, and *King Lear*, act i., sc. 4, ll. 235, 236. In the London *Punch* for April 10, 1852, the present Lord Beaconsfield is represented as the protectionist cuckoo in the hedge-sparrow's nest. ⁴ Pitiless. ⁵ Whole tribe.

And he hire that his herte hath on hire knet,
 Thus juge I, Nature, for I may not lye
 To non estat, I have non othir eye. 630

“But as for conseyl for to chese a make,
 If I were Resoun, certis thanne wolde I
 Conseyle yow the ryal tersel take,
 As seyde the terselet ful skylfully,¹
 As for the gentilleste and most worthi
 Which I have wrought so wel to myn plesaunce
 That to yow oughte to been a suffisaunce.”

With dredful² vois the formel tho answerde :
 “Myn rightful lady, goddesse of Nature,
 Soth is that I am evere undyr youre yerde, 640
 As is everyche lyvis creature,
 And mot ben youre whil that myn lyf may dure ;
 And therfore grauntyth me myn ferste bone,
 And myn entent that wele I seyn right sone.”

“I graunte it yow,” quod she, and right a-non
 This formel egle spak in this degre :

“Almyghty queen, unto this yer be gon
 I axe respit for to a-vise me,
 And aftyr that to have myn choys al fre ;
 This al and sum that I wele speke and seye ;
 Ye gete no more al-thow ye do me deye. 650

“I wele nat serven Venus ne Cupide,
 Forsothe as yit, be no manere weye.”

“Now, syn it may non othirwise betyde,”
 Quod tho Nature, “heere is no more to seye ;
 Thanne wolde I that these foulis were a-weye,

¹ Reasonably. ² Timid.

Eche with his make, for tarynge lengere
heere," —

And seyde hem thus, as ye shul aftyr here.

"To yow speke I, ye tersletis," quod Nature,
"Beth of good herte and servyth, alle thre ;

A yer nis nat so longe to endure, 661

And eche of yow peignyng in his degre

For to do wel, for, God wot, quyt is she

For yow this yer, what aftyr so be-falle ;

This entremes¹ is dressid for yow alle."

And whan this werk al brought was to an
ende,

To every foul Nature gaf his make

By evene a-cord, and on here weye they wende ;

But, Lord, the blisse and joye that they make !

For ech gan othir in his wyngis take, 670

And with here nekkis eche gan othyr wynde,

Thankyng alwey the noble queen of Kynde.

But fyrst were chosyn foulis for to synge,

As, yer be yer, was alwey the usance

To synge a Roundele at here departyng,

To don to Nature honour and plesaunce.

The note I trow i-makid was in Fraunce,

The wordis were sweche as ye may here fynde

The nexte vers, as I now have in mynde.

Nowe welcome, somore, with thy sonne softe, 680

That hast thes wintres wedres ovire-shake

And drevyne a-way the large nyghtes blake :

¹ Dainty morsel (Fr. *entremets*, dainties).

*Saynt Volantyne, that ert ful hye o lofte,
Thus syngen smale foules for thy sake.*

*Wele han they cause forto gladen ofte,
Sethe ech of hem recoverede hathe hys make;
Ful blisseful mowe they ben when they awake.*

And with the shoutyng whan the song was **do**
That the foulys madyn at here flyght a wey,
I wok, and othere bokys tok me to, **690**
To reede up-on; and yit I rede alwey,
In hope i-wis to rede so sum day,
That I shal mete sum-thing for to fare
The bet; and thus to rede I nele nat spare.

THE COMPLEYNT OF MARS.

The Proem.

“GLADETH,¹ ye lovers, on the morowe gray!
Loo, Venus, rysen amonge yon rows² rede!
And floures fresshe, honouren ye this day,
For when the sunne upriste then wol ye sprede
But ye lovers, that lye in eny drede,
Fleeth, lest wikked tongues yow espye!
Loo yonde the sunne,³ the candel of jalosye!
“Wyth teres blew, and with a wounded hert,

¹ Rejoice. ² Rays, streaks. ³ Cf. *Troilus and Cryseyde*, **ii**
1417, etc., for a similiar complaint

Taketh your leve, and with Seynt John to
borowe,¹

Apeseth sumwhat of your sorowes smert, 10

Tyme cometh efte that cese shal your sorowe.

The glad nyght ys worthe an hevy morowe!"

Seynt Valentyne, a foule thus herd I synge

Upon your day, er sunne gan up sprynge.

Yet sange this foule, "I rede yow al a-wake,

And ye that han not chosen in humble wyse,

Yet at this fest renoveleth your servyse,

With-out repentyng cheseth ye your make ;

And ye that han ful chosen as I devise,

Confermeth hyt perpetuely to dure, 20

And paciently taketh your aventure."

And for the worship of this highe fest,

Yet wol I, in my briddes wise, synge

The sentence of the Compleynt at the lest

That woful Mars made atte departyng

Fro fresshe Venus, in a morwynyng

Whan Phebus, with his firy torches rede,

Ransaked hath every lover in hys drede.

The Story.

Whilom the thrid hevenes lord ² a-bove,

As wel by hevenysh revolucioun 30

As by desert, hath wonne Venus his love

And she hath take him in subjeccioun,

¹ Pledge. Cf. *Canterbury Tales*, l. 15,372. ² Mars, the third
ord of heaven, then in conjunction with Venus

And as a maistresse taught him his lessoun,
Commaundyng him that nereve in her servise
He ner so bolde no lover to dispise.

For she forbad him jelosye at alle,
And cruelte, and bost, and tyrannye ;
She made at her lust so humble in alle,
That when her deyed to cast on hym her ye,
He toke in pacience to lyve or dye ; 40
And thus she brydeleth him in her maner,
With no-thing but with scourgyng of her cher.

Who regneth now in blysse but Venus,
That hath thys worthy knyght in governaunce ?
Who syngeth now but Mars, that serveth thus
The faire Venus, causer of plesaunce ?
He bynt him to perpetuall obeisaunce,
And she bynt her to love him for-ever,
But so be that his trespase hyt desever.

Thus be they knyht, and regnen as in heven
Be lokyng moost, til hyt fil on a tyde 51
That by her bothe assent was set a steven¹
That Mars shal entre as fast as he may glyde
In-to hir next paleys,² to abyde,
Walkyng hys cours, til she had him a-take ;
And he preiede her to faste³ her for his sake.

Then seyde he thus, " Myn hertis lady suete
Ye knowe wel my myschefe in that place,
For sikirly, til that I with yow mete,
My lyfe stant ther in aventure and grace, 60
But when I se the beaute of your face,

¹ Appointment. ² An astrological house or mansion. ³ Haste.

Ther ys no dred of deth may do me smert,
For alle your lust is ese to myn hert."

She hath so grete compassion on her knyght
That dwelleth in solitude til she come, —
For hyt stode so that ylke tyme no wight
Counseyled hym, ne seyde to him welcome, —
That nyghe her witte for sorowe was overcome;
Wherefore she sped as faste in her wey
Almost in oon day as he dyd in twey.¹ 70

The grete joye that was betwex hem two
When they be mette, ther may no tunge tel;
Ther is no more, but unto bed thei go;
And thus in joy and blysse I let hem duel;
This worthi Mars, that is of knyghthode wel,²
The Flour of Feyrenesse lappeth in his armes,
And Venus kysseth Mars, the god of armes.

Sojourned hath this Mars of which I rede
In chambre amynd the paleys, prively,
A certeyn tyme, til him fel a-drede, 80
Throgh Phebus, that was comen hastely
Within the paleys gates, ful sturdely,
With torche in honde, of which the stremes
bryght

On Venus chambre knockeden ful lyght.

The chambre ther as ley this fresshe quene
Depeynted was with white boles³ grete,
And by the lyght she knew, that shone so
shene,

¹ Her orbit being smaller than that of Mars, she passes through the heavens with this comparative rapidity. ² Source. ³ It was the sign Taurus.

That Phebus cam to bren¹ hem with his hete
 This cely² Venus, nygh dreynt in teres wete,
 Embraceth Mars, and seyde, "Alas, I dye! 90
 The torch is come that al this world wo-
 wrie."³

Up sterte Mars, hym luste not to slepe,
 When he his lady herde so compleyne,
 But for his nature was not for to wepe,
 In-stid of teres, fro his eyen tweyne
 The firi sparkes⁴ brosten out for peyne
 And hent⁵ his hauberke, that ley hym besyde.
 Fle wold he not, ne myght him-selven hide.

He threwe on his helme of huge wyght,
 And girt him with his swerde, and in his honde
 His myghty spere, as he was wont to fyght 101
 He shaketh so that almost hit to-wonde.⁶
 Ful hevy was he to walken over londe,
 He may not holde with Venus companye,
 But bad her fleen, lest Phebus her espye.

O woful Mars! alas, what maist thou seyne,
 That in the paleys of thy disturbaunce
 Art left by-hynde in peril to be sleyne?
 And yet ther-to ys double thy penaunce,
 For she that hath thyn hert in governaunce
 Is passed halfe the stremes⁷ of thin yen; 111
 That thou ner⁸ swift wel maist thou wepe and
 crien.

Nw fleeth Venus in-to Cilinios⁹ toure,

Burn. ² Simple. ³ Cover. ⁴ The influence of Venus, accord-
 ing to the astrologers, produces rain, that of Mars, heat. ⁵ Seized
 Bent double. ⁷ Rays. ⁸ Were not. ⁹ Cyllenius, Mercury.

With voide cours, for fere of Phebus lyght,
 Alas ! and ther ne hath she no socoure,
 For she ne founde ne saugh no maner wyght,
 And eke as ther she had but litil myght ;
 Wher-for her-selven for to hyde and save,
 Whithin the gate she fled in-to a cave.¹

Derke was this cave, and smokyng as the
 hel,

120

Not but two paes ² within the gate hit stode ;
 A naturel day in derk I let her duel.
 Now wol I speke of Mars, furiose and wode.³
 For sorow he wold have sene his hert blode ;
 Sith that he myght do her no companye,
 He ne roght not a myte for to dye.

So feble he wex for hete and for his wo
 That nygh he swelt, he myght unnethe ⁴ endure,
 He passeth but a sterre in dayes two ;
 But ner the lesse for al his hevy armure, 130
 He foloweth her that is his lyves cure,
 For whos departyng he toke gretter ire
 Then for al his hoote brennyng in the fire.

After he walketh softly a paas,
 Compleynyng, that ⁵ hyt pite was to here ;
 He seyde, " O lady bryght, Venus ! alas,
 That evere so wyde a compas ys my spere ! ⁶
 Alas ! when shal I mete yow, herte dere ?
 This twelfth daye of Aprile ⁷ I endure,
 Throgh jelouse Phebus, this mysaventure." 140

¹ Her approach to the sun paled her light, and she disappeared.
² Steps (paces). ³ Angry. ⁴ Scarcely. ⁵ In such wise that. ⁶ Or
 sit. ⁷ The day the sun entered Taurus, according to the Astrolabe.

Now God helpe sely Venus, allone !
 But, as God wolde, hyt happed for to be
 That while that Venus weping made her mone
 Cilinius, rydinge in his chevache ¹
 For Venus Balaunse, ² myght his paleys se ;
 And Venus he salueth, and maketh chere,
 And her receyveth as his frende ful dere.

Mars dwelleth forth in hes adversyte,
 Compleynyng ever on her departynge,
 And what his Compleynt was remembreth me,
 And therfore in this lusty morwnynge, 151
 As I best can I wol hit seyn and syng,
 And after that I wol my leve take ;
 And God gif every wyght joy of his make.

The Compleynt of Mars.

The ordre of compleynt requireth skylfully, ³
 That yf a wight shal pleyne ⁴ pitously
 Ther mot be cause wherfore that men pleyn,
 Other, men may deme he pleyneth folely,
 And causeles ; alas, that am not I !
 Wherfor the grounde and cause of al my peyn,
 So as my troubled witte may hit ateyn, 161
 I wol reherse, not for to have redresse,
 But to declare my grounde of hevynesse.

¹ Mercury in his course. ² This corrupt passage seems to mean that Mercury, riding towards Libra (the Balances), the mansion of Venus, came in sight of Gemini, his mansion, next to that of Venus. And the one into which she had stolen from the house of Mars. The house of Mars is the angle of the East, that of Venus the angle of the West. ³ Reasonably. ⁴ Complain.

The firste tyme, alas, that I was wroght,
 And for certeyn effectes hider broght,
 Be him that lordeth ech intelligence,
 I gaf my trewe servise and my thoght,
 For ever-more, — how dere I have hit boght! —
 To her that is of so gret excelence
 That what wight that first sheweth his pres-
 ence

170

When she is wrothe and taketh of hym no cure,
 He may not longe in joye of love endure.

This is no feyned mater that I telle ;
 My lady is the verrey sours and welle ¹
 Of beaute, lust, fredam, and gentilnesse,
 Of riche aray, how ² dere men hit selle,
 Of al disport in which men frendly duelle,
 Of love and pley, and of benigne humblesse,
 Of sounne of instrumentes of al suetnesse,
 And therto so wel fortunèd and thewed, 180
 That thurgh the worlde her goodnesse is
 yshewed.

What wonder ys then thogh that I beset
 My servise on such on that may me knet
 To wele or wo, sith hit lythe in her myght?
 Therefore my hert for-ever I to her hight,³
 Ne truly for my dethe I shal not let
 To ben her truest servaunt, and her knyght ;
 I flater noght, that may wete every wyght,
 For this day in her servise shal I dye,
 But,⁴ grace be, I se her oones wyth ye. 190

¹ Spring. ² However. ³ Promised. ⁴ Unless

To whom shal I then pleyn of my distresse?
 Who may me helpe? Who may my harm redresse?

Shal I compleyn unto my lady fre?
 Nay, certes, for she hath such hevynesse
 For fere, and eke for wo, that, as I gesse,
 In lytil tyme hit wol her bane be;
 But were she safe hit were no fors of ¹ me!
 Alas, that ever lovers mote endure,
 For love, so many a perilouse aventure!

For tho so be that lovers be as trewe 20c
 As eny metal that is forged newe,
 In mony a case hem tydeth ofte sorowe.
 Somtyme her ladies will not on hem rewe;
 Somtyme, yf that jelosie hyt knewe,
 They myghten lyghtly ley her hede to borowe;
 Somtyme envymous folke with tungen horowe ⁸
 Departen ⁴ hem, alas! Whom may they plesse?
 But he be fals, no lover hath his ese!

But what availeth suche a longe sermoun
 Of adventures of love up and doune? 21c
 I wol returne and speken of my peyne;
 The poynt is this of my distruccioun, —
 My righte lady, my savacyoun,
 Is in affray, ⁵ and not ⁶ to whom to pleyn.
 O hert suete! O lady sovereign!
 For your disese I oght wel sowne and swelt, ⁷
 Thogh I none other harme ne drede felt.

¹ Consequence what became of. ² Pawn. ³ Foul. ⁴ Separate Fear. ⁵ Knows not. ⁷ Swoon and faint.

'To what fyne¹ made the God that sitte so
hye,

Be-nethen here love other companye,
And streyneth folke to love malgre her hede,
And then her joy, for oght I can espye, 221
Ne lasteth not the twynkelyng of an eye;
And somme han never joy til they be dede.
What meneth this? what is this mystihede?²
Wherto constreyneth he his folke so fast
Thing to desyre but hit shuld lenger last?

And thogh he made a lover love a thing,
And maketh hit seme stidfast and during,
Yet putteth he in hyt such mysaventure
That rest nys ther in his gevinge; 230
And that is wonder that so juste a kynge
Doth such hardnesse to his creature.
'Thus, whether love breke, or elles dure,
Algates he that hath with love to done
Hath ofter wo then changed ys the mone.

Hit semeth he hath to lovers enemyte,
And lyke a fissher, as men alday may se,
Bateth hys angle-hoke with summe plesaunce,
Til mony a fissch ys wode³ til that he be
Sesed ther-with, and then at erst hath he 240
Al his desire; and ther-with al myschaunce;
And thogh the lyne breke, he hath penaunce,
For with the hoke he wounded is so sore
That he his wages kathe for ever-more.

¹ End. ² Vagueness. ³ Possessed.

The Broche of Thebes¹ was of such a kynde,
 So ful of rubies, and of stones of Ynde,
 That every wight that set on hit an ye,
 He wend anon to worthe² out of his mynde, —
 So sore the Beaute wold his herte bynde, —
 Til he hit had him thoght he muste dye, 250
 And whan that hit was his then shuld he drye³
 Such woo, for drede, ay while that he hit had,
 That welnygh for the fere he shulde mad.⁴

And whan hit was fro his possessioun
 Then had he double wo and passioun,
 For he so feir a tresore had forgo.
 But yet this broche, as in conclusioun,
 Was not the cause of this confusioun,
 But he that wrought hit enfortuned⁵ hit so
 That every wight that had hit shuld have wo,
 And therfore in the worcher was the vice, 261
 And in the covetour that was so nyce.⁶

So fareth hyt by lovers and by me,
 For thogh my lady have so gret Beaute
 That I was mad til I had gete her grace,
 She was not cause of myn adversite,
 But he that wrought her, also mot I the,⁷
 That put suche Beaute in her suete face,
 That made me coveten and purchase⁸
 Myn oun dethe ; him wite⁹ I that I dye, 270
 And myn oun witte that ever I clombe sa
 hye.

¹ Made by Vulcan, described in the *Thebais* of Statius, book ii
 Be. ² Suffer. ³ Go mad. ⁴ Gave it such a fortune ⁵ Foolish
 Thrive. ⁶ Obtain. ⁷ Blame.

But to yow, hardy knyghtis of renoun,
 Syn that ye be of my devisioun,¹ —
 Al be I not worthy so grete a name,
 Yet seyn these clerkes I am your patroun, —
 Ther-fore ye oght have some compassioun
 Of my disese, and take hit not agame.
 The pruddest of yow may be made ful tame.
 Wherfore I prey yow of your gentillesse,
 That ye compleyne for myn hevynesse. 280

And ye, my ladyes, that ben true and stable,

Be wey of kynde ye oghten to be able
 To have pite of folke that be in peyn ;
 Now have ye cause to clothe yow in sable,
 Sith that youre emperise, the honorable,
 Is desolat, wel oghte ye to pleyne ;
 Now shuld your holy teres falle and reyne.
 Alas, your honor and your emperise,
 Negh ded for drede ne can her not chevisa !²

Compleyneth eke, ye lovers, al in fere,³ 290
 For her that with unfeyned humble chere
 Was evere redy to do yow socoure ;
 Compleyneth her that evere hath had yow der ;
 Compleyneth beaute, fredom, and manere ;
 Compleyneth her that endeth your labour ;
 Compleyneth thilke ensample of al honour,
 That never did but alwey gentillesse ;
 Kytheth⁴ therfor on her summe kyndenesse !

¹ Under my influence Cf. *Canterbury Tales*, l. 2024 ² Speed
 succeed, achieve. ³ Company. ⁴ Show.

THE COMPLEYNTE OF FAIRE ANE-
LYDA AND FALSE ARCYTE.

THOU ferse God of armes, Mars the rede,
That in the frosty contre called Trace,¹
Within thy grisly temple ful of drede,
Honoured art as patroun of that place!
With thy Bellona, Pallas, ful of grace!
Be presente, and my songe contynue and guye.
At my begynnyng thus I to the crye.

For hit ful depe is sonken in my mynde,
With pitous hert, in Englyssh to endyte
This storie olde, in Latyn which I fynde, 10
Of quene Anelyda and fals Arcite,
That elde,² which al can frete³ and bite, —
As hit hath freten mony a noble storie, —
Hath nygh devoured out of our memorie.

Be favorable eke, thou Polymnya,⁴
On Parnaso that with thy sustres glade,
By Elycon, not fer from Cirrea,⁵
Syngest with vois memorial in the shade,
Under the laurer, which that may not fade,
And do that I my shippe to haven wyne. 20
First folow I Stace, and after him Corynne.⁶

When Theseus, with werres longe and grete,

¹ Cf. *Canterbury Tales*, l. 1972. ² Antiquity. ³ Erode. ⁴ The lyric Muse. ⁵ Perhaps *Monte Circeo*, the abode of Circe, described by Theophrastus, or Cyrius, on the slopes of Mt. Taurus, in Syria. ⁶ P. Papinius Statius wrote a heroic poem entitled *Thebais*, an account of the expedition of the seven against Thebes, from which came the material for the stanzas about Theseus. Corinna was poetess known in the Middle Ages, but now forgotten.

The aspre¹ folke of Cithe² had overcome,
 With laurer crowned, in his chare, gold bete,³
 Home to his contre houses is he come ;
 For whiche the peple, blisful al and somme,
 So criden, that un-to the sterres hit wente,
 And him to honouren dide al her entente.

Beforene this duke, in signe of victorie,
 The trompes come, and in his baner large, 30
 The ymage of Mars ;⁴ and in token of glorie,
 Men myghte sene of tresoure mony a charge,
 Mony a bright helme, and mony a spere and
 targe,

Mony a freshe knyght, and mony a blysfyl route,
 On hors, on fote, in al the felde aboute.

Ipolita⁵ his wife, the hardy quene
 Of Cithea, that he conquered hadde,
 With Emelye her yonge suster shene,
 Faire in a chare of golde he with hym ladde,
 That al the grounde about her char she spradde
 With brightnesse of the beaute in her face, 41
 Fulfilled of largesse and of alle grace.

With his tryumphe, and laurer-crowned thus,
 In al the floure of fortunes gevyng,
 Let I this noble prince, this Theseus,
 Towarde Athenes in his wey ryding,
 And fonde⁶ I wol inne shortly for to bringe
 The sleye wey of that I gan to write,
 Of quene Anelida and fals Arcite.

¹ Rough. ² Scythia. ³ Ornamented. Cf. *Canterbury Tales*, 376. ⁴ Cf. *Canterbury Tales*, l. 381. ⁵ Try.

Mars, whiche thurgh his furiose course of ire,
 The olde wrethe of Juno to fulfille, 51
 Hath set the peples hertis bothe on fire
 Of Thebes and Grece, eche other for to kille
 With bloody speres, restless, never stille,
 But throng now her, now ther, amonge hem
 bothe,
 That everyche other slough, so were they
 wrothe.

For when Amphiorax¹ and Tydeus,
 Ipomedon and Parthonope² also
 Wer ded, and slayn proude Campaneus,³
 And when the wrecched Thebans bretheren
 two⁴ 60

Were slayn, and kyng Adrastus home ygo,
 So desolat stode Thebes and so bare,
 That no wight coude remedie of his care.

And when the olde Creon⁵ gan espye
 How that the blood roial was broght adoun,
 He helde the cite by his tyrannye,
 And dyde⁶ the gentils of that regioun
 To ben his frendes, and duellen in the toune.
 So, what for love of him, and what for awe,
 The noble folke wer to the toune ydrawe. 70

Among alle these, Anelida the quene
 Of Ermony⁷ was in that toune duellyng,
 That fairer was then is the sunne shene ;
 Thurghout the worlde so gan her name springe,

¹ Amphiaras. See Longfellow's Dante (edition of 1867, in one volume), pp. 164, 401. ² Parthenopæus. ³ Capaneus. ⁴ Eteocles and Polyneices. ⁵ King of Thebes. ⁶ Caused. ⁷ Armenia.

That her to seen had every wyght likynge ;
 For, as of trouthe, is ther noon her ylyche,
 Of al the wymen in this worlde-riche.¹

Yonge was this quene, of twenty yer of elde,
 Of mydil stature, and of suche fairenesse,
 That Nature had a joy hir to beholde ; 80
 And for to speken of her stidfastnesse,
 She passede bothe Penelope and Lucesse,
 And shortly, yf she shal be comprehended,
 In her myghte nothing been amended.

This Theban knyghte² eke, for sothe to
 seyne,
 Was yonge, therto withal a lusty knyght,
 But he was double in love, and nothing pleyne,³
 And subtil in that crafte, overe eny wyght,
 And with his kunnyng wan this lady bryght :
 For so ferforthe he can her trouthe assure, 90
 That she him trusted over eny creature.

What shuld I seyn ? She loveth Arcyte so
 That when that he was absent eny throw,⁴
 Anoon her thoght her herte brast atwo ?
 For in her sight to her he bare hym low,
 So that she wende have al his hert yknowe ;
 But he was fals, hit nas but feyned chere, —
 As nedeth not to men suche craft to lere !

But natheles ful mykel besynesse
 Had he, er that he myght his lady wynne, 100
 And swor he wolde dyen for distresse,

¹ World-kingdom (O. E. *rice*, dominion). ² Arcyte. Cf. *Canterbury Tales*, l. 1013. ³ Full, satisfied (Fr. *plein*, full). ⁴ While

Or from his wit, he seyde, he wolde twynne.
 Alas the while ! for hit was routhe and synne,
 That she up-on his sorowes wolde rewe,
 But nothing thinketh the fals as doth the trewe

Her fredom fonde Arcyte in suche maner,
 That al was his that she hath, moche or lyte ;
 Ne to no creature ne made she chere,
 Ferther then it lykede ¹ to Arcyte ;
 Ther was no lak with whiche he myght hit
 wite,² 110

She was so ferforth gevin hym to plese,
 That al that lyked him dyd her herte ese.

Ther nas to her no maner lettre ysente
 That touched love, from eny maner wyght,
 That she ne shewed hit him er hit was brent ;
 So pleyn ³ she was, and did her fulle myght,
 That she nyl hiden nothing from her knyght,
 Lest he of any untrouthe her upbreyde ;
 Withoute bode ⁴ his herte she obeyde.

And eke he made him jelouse over her, 120
 That what that eny man hadde to her seyde,
 Anoon he wolde preyen her to swere
 What was that worde, or make hym evel
 apaide ; ⁵

Then wende she out of her wyt have breyd,⁶
 But alle was but sleight and flaterie ;
 Withouten love, he feynede jelousye.

And alle this toke she so debonaireiy,

¹ Pleased. ² Blame. ³ Open. ⁴ Delay. ⁵ Dissatisfied
 Started.

That al his wil, her thoght hit skilful ¹ thing ;
 And ever the lenger she loved him tendirly,
 And did him honour as he wer a kyng. 130
 Her hert was to him wedded with a ringe ;
 For so ferforth upon trouthe is her entent,
 That wher he gooth, her herte with him wente.

When she shal ete, on him is so her thoght,
 That wel unnethe ² of mete toke she kepe ;
 And whenne she was to her reste broght,
 On him she thoghte ay til that she slepe ;
 When he was absent, prevely she wepe.
 Thus lyveth feire Anelida the quene,
 For fals Arcyte, that did her al this tene.³ 140

This fals Arcyte, of his newfanglenesse,
 For she to him so lowly was and trewe,
 Toke lesse deynte ⁴ for her stedfastnesse,
 And saw another lady, proude and newe,
 And ryght anon he clad him in her hewe, —
 Wot I not whethir in white, rede, or grene, —
 And falsede fair Anelida the quene.

But nathelesse, grete wonder was hit noon
 I'ghogh he were fals for hit is the kynde ⁵ of man,
 Sith Lamek ⁶ was, that is so longe agoon, 150
 To ben in love as fals as evere he can ;
 He was the firste fader that began
 To loven two, and was in bigamye.
 And he fonde tentes first, but yf men lye.

This fals Arcyte sumwhat most he feyne

¹ Reasonable. ² Scarcely. ³ Grief. Valued less. ⁵ Nature.
 Cf. *Canterbury Tales*, l. 12,096.

When he wex fals, to covere his traitorie,
 Ryght as an hors, that can both bite and pieyn ;
 For he bar her on honde¹ of trecherie,
 And swore he coude her doublenesse espie,
 And al was falsnes that she to him mente ; 160
 Thus swore this thefe, and forthe his way he
 wente.

Alas ! what herte myght enduren hit,
 For routhe or wo, her sorow for to telle ?
 Or what man hath the cunnyng or the wit ?
 Or what man mighte within the chambre duelle,
 Yf I to him rehersen shal the helle
 That suffreth feyre Anelida the quene
 For fals Arcyte, that did her al this tene ?

She wepith, waileth, swouneth pitously,
 To grounde dede she falleth as a stoon ; 170
 Craumpysssheth her lymes crokedly ;
 She speketh as her witte wer al agoon ;
 Other colour then asshen hath she noon,
 Ne non other worde speketh she moche or lyte,
 But " Mercy ! cruel herte myn, Arcyte ! "

And thus endureth, til that she was so mate²
 That she nad foot, on which she may sustene.
 But forthe, languisshing evere in this estate,
 Of which Arcyte hath nother routhe ne tene ;
 His herte was elleswhere newe and grene ; 180
 That on her wo, he deyneth him not to thinke .
 Him rekketh never wher she flete³ or synke.

His newe lady holdeth him so narwe

¹ Accused. ² Dejected. ³ Whether she float.

Up by the brydil, at the staves ende,
That every worde he dred hit as an arwe ;
Her daunger ¹ made him bothe bowe and bende,
And as her luste, made him turne or wende ;
For she ne graunted him in her lyvyng
No grace, whi that he hath lust to singe ;

But drof hym forthe, unnethe list her knowe
That he was servaunt unto her ladishippe ; 191
But lest that he wer proude, she helde him
lowe.

Thus serveth he, withoute mete or sippe
She sent him now to londe, now to shippe,²
And for she gafe him daunger al his fille,
Therfor she had him at her oune wille.

Ensample of this, ye thriftie wymmen alle !
Take hede of Anelida and fals Arcyte,
That for her list hym her dere herte calle,
And was so meke, therfor he loved her lyte ;³
The kynde of mannes hert is to delyte 201
In thing that straunge is, also God me save !
For what they may not gete, that wolde they
have.

Now turne we to Anelida ageyn,
That pyneth day be day in langwisshinge :
But when she sawe that her ne gat no geyn.
Upon a day, ful sorowfully wepinge,
She cast her for to make a compleynyng ;
And with her oune honde she gan hit write,
And sent it to her Theban knyght Arcyte. 210

¹ Imperiousness. ² Cf. *Dethe of Blaunche*, l. 1029, note. ³ Little.

*The Complaynt of Faire Anelyda upon Fals
Arcyte.*

So thirleth¹ with the poynt of remembraunce,
The swerde of sorowe, ywhet with fals plesaunce,
Myn herte bare of blis, and blake of hewe,
That turned is to quakyng al my daunce,
My suerte into a whaped² countenaunce,
Sith hit availeth not for to ben trewe :
For who-so truest is, hit shal hir rewe
That serveth love, and dothe her observaunce
Alwey to oon, and chaungeth for no newe.

I wot my self as wel as eny wight, 220
For I loved oon, with al my hert and myght
More then my self an hundred thousand sithe,
And cleped him my hertis life, my knyght,
And al was his, as fer as hit was ryght,
And when that he was glad, then was I blithe,
And his disese³ was my deth as swithe,⁴
And he ageyn, his trouthe me had yplyght,
For everemore hys lady me to kythe.⁵

Alas ! now hath he left me, causeles.
And of my wo he is so routheles, 230
That with a worde him list not ones deyne
To bring ageyn my sorowful hert in pes,

¹ Pierceth. ² Stupefied. ³ Discomfort. ⁴ Quickly. ⁵ Acknowledge.

For he is caught up in another les;¹
 Ryght as him list, he laugheth at my peyne,
 And I ne can myn herte not restreyne
 That I ne love him alwey natheles,
 And of al this I not² to whom me pleyne.

And shal I pleyn (alas! the harde stounde)
 Unto my fo, that gave my hert a wounde,
 And yet desireth that myn harme be more? 240
 Nay, certis! ferther wol I never founde³
 Non other helpe my sores for to sounde;
 My desteny hath shapen hit so yore,
 I wil non other medecyne ne lore,
 I wil ben ay ther I was ones bounde;
 That I have seide, be seide for evermore.

Alas! wher is become your gentillesse?
 Your wordes ful of plesaunce and humblesse?
 Your observaunces in soo low manere?
 And your awayting, and your besynesse, 250
 Upon me that ye calden your maistresse,
 Your sovereigne lady in this worlde here?
 Alas! is ther now nother worde ne chere,
 Ye vouchesafe upon myn hevynesse?
 Alas! youre love, I bye hit al to dere!

Now certis, swete, thogh that ye
 Thus causeles the causer be,
 Of my dedely adversyte,

¹ Leash. ² Know not. ³ Try.

Your manly resoun oght it to respit,
 To slene ¹ your frende, and namely me, 260
 That never yet in no degre
 Offended yow, as wisly ² he

That al wote out of wo my soule quyte.³
 But for I shewed yow, Arcyte,
 Al that men wolde to me wryte,
 And was so besy yow to delyte, —

Myn honor safe, — meke, and kynde, and fre,
 Therfor ye put on me this wyte :⁴

And of me rekke not a myte,
 Thogh the swerde of sorow byte 270

My woful herte, thro your cruelte.

My swete foo, why do ye so, for shame ?
 And thenken ye that furthered be your name,
 To love a-newe, and ben untrewe ? Nay !
 And putte yow in sclaunder now and blame,
 And do to me adversite and grame,⁵
 That love yow most — God, wel thou wost ! —
 alway ?

And come ageyn, and be al pleyn somme day,
 And turne al this, that hath be mys, to game ;
 And al forgeve, while that I lyve may. 280

Lo, herte myn, al this is for to seyn,
 As wheder shal I prey or elles pleyn ?
 Whiche is the wey to doon yow to be trewe ?
 For either mot I have yow in my cheyn,

¹ Slay. ² Truly. ³ Free (acquitt). ⁴ Blame. ⁵ Grief.

Or with the dethe ye mot departe¹ us tweyn;
 Ther ben non other mene weyes newe,
 For, God so wisly upon my soule rewe,
 As verrelly ye sleen me with the peyn;
 That may ye se unfeyned of myn hewe.

For thus ferforthe have I my dethe soght,
 My-self I mourdre with my prevy thocht; 291
 For sorowe and routhe of your unkyndenesse,
 I wepe, I wake, I fast, al helpeth noght;
 I weyve² joy that is to speke of oght,
 I voyde companye, I fle gladnesse;
 Who may avaunt³ hir bet of hevynesse
 Then⁴ I? And to this plyte have ye me broght,
 Withoute gilt, — me nedith no witsesse.

And shal I prey, and weyve womanhede?
 Nay! rather dethe, then do so foule a dede!
 And mercie axe, and gilteles, — what nede?
 And yf I pleyne what lyfe that I lede, 302
 Yow rekketh not; that know I out of drede;
 And if I unto yow myn othes bede⁵
 For myn excuse, a skorne shal be my mede,
 Your chere floureth, but it wol not sede,
 Ful longe agoon I oght have taken hede.

For thogh I hadde yow newe to morowe
 ageyn,
 I myght as wel holde Aperile fro reyn,

¹ Separate. ² Put away. ³ Boast ⁴ Than. ⁵ Offer.

As holde yow to make yow be stedfast. 310

Almyghty God, of trouthe the sovereign !

Wher is the trouthe of man ? who hath it slayne ?

Who that hem loveth, she shal hem fynde as
faste,

As in a tempest is a roten maste.

Is that a tame best, that is ay feyne

To renne away, when he is leest agaste ?

Now mercie, swete, yf I myssey !

Have I seyde oght amys, I prey ?

I not,¹ my wit is al away.

I fare as dothe the songe of *Chantepleure* ;²

For now I pley, and now I pley, 321

I am so mased that I dey,

Arcyte hath borne away the key

Of al my worlde, and my good aventure.

For in this worlde nys no creature,

Walkynge in more discomfiture,

Then I, ne more sorowe endure ;

And yf I slepe a furlonge wey or tweye,³

Then thenketh me that your figure

Before me stont clad in asure,⁴ 330

Efte to swere yet a newe assure,

For to be trew, and mercie me to preye.

The longe nyght, this wonder sight I drye,⁵

And on the day for this afray I dye,

¹ Know not. ² Singing-weeping (Fr. *chanter*, to sing, *pleurer*, to weep). ³ A little while. ⁴ Blue being the emblem of truth. Cf. *Canterbury Tales*, l. 15,420; *Troilus and Cryseyde*, iii. 835. ⁵ Suffer.

And of al this ryght noght, ywis,¹ ye reche ;
 Ne neveremo myn yen two be drie,
 And to your routhe and to your trouthe I crie !
 But, welawey ! to fer be they to feche,
 Thus holdeth me my destyne a wreche, 339
 But me to rede² out of this drede, or guye,³
 Ne may my wit, so weyke is hit, not streche.

Then ende I thus, sith I may do no more, —
 I gif hit up for now and evermore ;
 For I shal never efte put in balaunce
 My sekernes,⁴ ne lernè of love the lore ;
 But as the swan,⁵ I have herd seyde ful yore,
 Ageyns his dethe shal singen his penaunce,
 So singe I here the destyne or chaunce,
 How that Arcyte, Anelyda so sore
 Hath thirled⁶ with the poynt of remembraunce.

Whan that Anelyda, this woful quene, 351
 Hath of her hande written in this wyse,
 With face deed, betwyxen pale and grene,
 She fel a-swoone ; and sythe⁷ she gan to ryse,
 And unto Mars avoweth sacrifyse
 Within the temple, with a sorowful chere,
 That shapen was, as ye may plainly here.⁸ 357

¹ Truly. ² Counsel. ³ Guide. ⁴ Endanger my peace. ⁵ Cf. *Parlement of Foules*, l. 342. ⁶ Pierced. ⁷ Afterwards. ⁸ The last stanza is not in all MSS. The poem ends thus abruptly.

THE FORMER AGE (ÆTAS PRIMA).¹

A BLYSFUL lyf, a paysyble and a swete,
 Ledden the poeples in the former age ;
 They helde hem paied of the fructes that they
 ete,
 Whiche that the feldes gave hem by usage,
 They ne weere nat for-pampred with owtrage.
 Unknowyn was the querne² and eke the melle .
 They eten mast, hawes, and swych *panage*,³
 And dronken water of the colde welle.

Yit nas the ground nat wounded with the
 plow, 9

But corn up-sprong, unsowe of mannes hond,
 The which they knod and eete nat half i-now ;
 No man yit knewe the forwes of his lond ;
 No man the fyr out of the flynt yit fonde ;
 Unkorven and ungrobbed lay the vyne ;
 No man yit in the mortar spices grond
 To clarre,⁴ ne to sause of galentyne.⁵

No madyr welde,⁶ or wod⁷ no litestere⁸
 Ne knew ; the fles was of his former hewe ;
 No flessh ne wyste offence of egge⁹ or spere ;
 No coyn ne knew man which is fals or trewe ;

¹ These lines, discovered by Mr. Henry Bradshaw, of King's College, Cambridge, and first published by Dr. Richard Morris in 1864 are an enlargement of the fifth metre of the second book of the *Consolations of Philosophy*, by Boethius, a favorite work of Chaucer of which he made a complete prose version. ² A sort of hand mill. ³ Fruits and nuts taking the place of bread. It is a French word, having its root in the Latin *panis*, bread. ⁴ A spiced drink, piment. ⁵ Sopped bread, spiced. ⁶ Flowed. ⁷ Woad. ⁸ Dyer. ⁹ Edge.

No ship yit karf the wawes grene and blewe ;
 No marchaunt yit ne fette outlandissh¹ ware ;
 No trompes for the werres folk ne knewe, 23
 Ne towres heye and walles rounde or square.

What sholde it han avayled to werreye ?
 Ther lay no profyt, ther was no rychesse ;
 But cursed was the tyme, I dar wel seye,
 That men fyrst dede hir swety bysynesse
 To grobbe up metal lurkyng in dirkenesse,
 And in the ryveres fyrste gemmys sowhte ; 30
 Allas ! than sprong up al the cursydnesse
 Of covetyse that fyrst our sorwe broughte !

Thyse tyraunts put hem gladly nat in pres
 No places wyld ne bussches for to wynne.
 Ther poverte is, as seith Diogenes,
 Ther as vitayle eke is so skars and thinne,
 That nought but mast or apples is ther-inne ;
 But ther as bagges² ben and fat vitaile
 Ther wol they gon and spare for no synne
 With al hir ost the cyte forto asayle. 40

Yit were no paleis chaumbres, ne non halles ;
 In kaves and wodes softe and swete,
 Sleptin this blyssed folk withowte walles,
 On gras or leves in joye reste and quiete ;
 No down of fetheres, ne no bleched shete
 Was kyd³ to hem, but in seurte they slepte ;
 Hir hertes weere al on withoute galles,⁴
 Everych of hem his feith to other kepte.

¹ Foreign. ² Pouches. ³ Made known. ⁴ Gall, rancor. The rhyme calls for a word ending in *ete*.

Unforged was the hauberke and the plate ;
 The lambyssh ¹ poeple, voyded of alle vyse, 50
 Hadden no fantasye to debate,²
 But eche of hem wolde other wel cheryce ;
 No pride, non envye, non avaryce,
 No lord, no taylage by no tyranye,
 Humblesse, and pes, good feith the emperyce,
 Fulfilled erthe of olde curteisye.³

Yit was nat Jupiter the lykerous,
 That fyrst was fadyr of delicacye,
 Come in this world, ne Nembrot ⁴ desyrus
 To regnen had nat maad his towres hye. 60
 Allas ! allas ! now may men wepe and crye,
 For in owre dayes nis but covetyse,
 Dowblenesse, and tresoun, and envye,
 Poyson, manslaughtre, and mordre in sondry
 wyse.

TROYLUS AND CRYSEYDE.

FIRST BOOK.

Proem.

THE double sorowe of Troylus to tellen,
 That was the kynge Priamus sone of Troye,
 In lovyng how hise aventures fellen

¹ Lamblike. ² Strive. ³ This line, wanting in the MSS., is a conjectural emendation by the Rev. W. W. Skeat. Compare with this description of the Golden Age that of Ovid (*Metamorphoses* i.) also *Purgatorio*, xxii. 148 ; and *Don Quixote*, book i., chapter xi Nimrod, founder of Babylon.

From wo to wele, and after out of joye,
 My purpos is, er that I parte fro ye.
 Thesiphone,¹ thou help me for tendite
 This woful vers, that wepen as I write !
 To the clepe I, thow goddesse of torment !
 Thou cruel wighte, sorowynge ever in peyne,
 Help me, that am the sorowful instrument 10
 That helpeth lovers, as I kan,² to pleyne :
 For wel it sit, the sothe for to seyne,
 A woful wyght to han a drery feere,³
 And to a sorwful tale a sory chere.

For I that god of Loves servaunt serve,
 Ne dar to love for myn unliklynnesse,⁴
 Preyen for speed, al sholde I therfore sterve,
 So fer I am from his helpe in derkenesse ;
 But natheles, if this may done gladnesse
 To any lovere, and his cause avaylle, 20
 Have he my thonk, and myn be this travaille.

But ye lovers that bathen in gladdenesse,
 If any drope of pitee in yow be,
 Remembreth yow on passed hevynesse,
 That ye han felt, and on the adversite
 Of other folk, and thenketh how that ye
 Han felt that Love dorste yow displese,
 Or ye han wonne hym with to grete an ese.

And preyeth for hem that ben in the cas
 Of Troylus, as ye may after heere, 30
 That Love hem brynge in hevene to solas.

¹ Tisiphone, avenger of murder, one of the three Furies. ² Know. Companion. ⁴ Chaucer had before referred to his ignorance in matters relating to love. Cf. *Parlement of Foules*, l. 8.

And eke for me preyeth to God so deere,
 That I have myght to shew, in som manere,
 Swich payne and wo, as Loves folk endure,
 In Troylus unsely¹ aventure.

And byddeth² ek for hem that ben despeyred
 In love, that nevere nyl recovered be :
 And ek for hem that falsly been apeyred³
 Thorgh wikked tonges, be it he or she :
 Thus byddeth God, for his benignite, 40
 To graunte hem sone out of this world to passe.
 That ben despeyred out of Loves grace ;

And byddeth eke for hem that ben at ese,
 That God hem graunte ay goode perseveraunce,
 And sende hem myght hire loves so to plesse,
 That it to love be worship and plesaunce :
 For so hope I my soule best to avaunce,
 To preye for hem that Loves servauntes be,
 And write hire wo, and lyve in charite,

And for to have of hem compassyoun, 50
 As thogh I were hire owne brother deere.
 Now herkeneth with a goode entencioun,
 For now wol I gone streght to my matere,
 In whiche ye may the double sorwes here
 Of Troylus, in lovyng of Cryseyde,
 And how that she forsoke him or she deyede.

Unhappy. ² Pray (O. E. *biddan*, to ask ; compare *beadsman*
 one who offers prayers). ³ Have suffered false detraction.

The Story.

It is wele wist, how that the Grekes stronge
 In armes with a thousand shippes wente
 To Troye wardes, and the cite longe
 Assegheden,¹ nygh ten yer er they stente ; 60
 And in dyverse wise and oon entente,
 The ravyshynge to wreken² of Eleyne,³
 By Paris don, they wroghten al hire peyne.

Now fel it so, that in the toun ther was
 Dwellynge a lord of grete auctorite,
 A grete dyvyn⁴ that cleped was Calkas,
 That in science so experte was, that he
 Knew wele that Troye sholde destroyed be,
 By answer of his god, that hyghte thus,
 Daun Phebus, or Apollo Delphicus.⁵ 70

So when this Calkas knew by calkulynge,
 And eke by answer of this Apollo,
 That Grekes sholden swiche a peple brynge,
 Thorgh whiche that Troye moste ben fordo,
 He cast⁶ anon out of the town to go :
 For wel wist he by sort⁷ that Troy sholde
 Destroyed ben, ye, wold who-so or nolde.⁸

For which for to departen softely,
 Took purpos ful this for-knowynge wyse,⁹
 And to the Grekes oost ful pryvely 80
 He stal anon, and they in courteys wyse

¹ Besieged. ² Revenge. ³ Helen. ⁴ Diviner, soothsayer. ⁵ The
 oracle at Delphi, inspired by Apollo. ⁶ Planned. ⁷ Divination
 Would not. ⁸ Provident wise one.

Hym deden bothen worschipp and servyse,
 In truste that he hath kunnyng hem to rede ¹
 In every peril, which that is to drede.

The noyse up rose when it was first aspied,
 Thorgh al the toun, and generally was spoken,
 That Calkas traitor fled was and allied
 With hem of Grece ; and casten to ben wroken
 On him that falsly hadde his trouthe so broken
 And sayden that he and alle his kyn atoones ²
 Ben worthy for to brennen, fel and bones. ³

Now hadde Calkas left, in this miscnaunce,
 Alle unwiste of this fals and wikked dede,
 His doghter, which that was in grete penaunce,
 For of hir lyf she was ful sore in drede,
 As she that nyste ⁴ what was best to rede ; ⁵
 For bothe a wydew was she, and allone
 Of any frend to whom she dorste mone.

Cryseyde was this lady name aright ;
 As to my doom, in all Troyes cite 100
 Was non so fayre, for passynge every wight
 So aungellyke was hir natif beaute,
 That lyke a thyng immortal semede she,
 As doth an hevenysssh, parfit creature,
 That doun was sent in scornynge of Nature.

This lady, whiche that herd al day at ere
 Hire faderes shame, his falsenesse and tresoun.
 Wel neygh out of hire witt for sorw and fere,
 In widewes habit large of samyt ⁶ broune,

¹ Wisdom to counsel. ² Planned to be avenged. ³ Skin and bones. ⁴ Knew not. ⁵ Counsel. ⁶ A rich silk or satin.

On knees she fel byforne Ector adoune, 110
 With pitous vois and tenderly wepynge,
 His mercy bad,¹ hire-selven excusynge.²

Nowe was this Ector pitous of nature,
 And saugh that she was sorowfully bygone,³
 And that she was so fayre a creature,
 Of his godenesse he gladded hire anone,
 And sayde, "Lat youre faderes tresoun gone
 To sory hap, and ye your-self in joye
 Dwellyth with us while you goode list in Troye ;
 " And alle the honour that men may don ⁴ you
 have, 120

As thogh your fader dwellede al here,
 Ye shal han, and your body shalle men save,
 As far as I may ought enquire or here."
 And she him thankked with ful humble chere,
 And ofter wold, and it hadde ben his wille.
 She toke hyre leve, went hoom, and held hir
 stille.

And in hire house she abode with swich
 meyne ⁵
 As til ⁶ hire honour nede was to holde,
 And whil she was dwellynge in that cite, 129
 Kepte hire estate, and bothe of yonge and olde,
 Ful wel byloved, and wel folk of hire tolde : ⁷
 But whether that she children hadde or non,⁸
 I rede it noght, therefore I lete it gone.

¹ Prayed. ² Chaucer delicately avoies mentioning that Cryseyde accused her father, as Boccaccio relates. ³ In a sorrowful state. Cause. ⁵ Menials. ⁶ To. ⁷ Folk esteemed her. ⁸ But Boccaccio states expressly that she cared not for children, and had none.

The thynges fellen, as they don of werre,
 Bitwixen hem of Troye and Grekes ofte,
 For somday boughten they of Troye it dere,¹
 And eft the Grekes founden nothingse softe
 The folk of Troye ; and thus Fortune, on lofte
 And under, eft gan hem to wheielen² bothe,
 Aftir hire cours, ay whil they weren wrothe. 14c

But how this toun com to destruccioun,
 Ne falleth noght to purpos me to telle ;
 For-why, it were a longe digressioun
 Fro my matere, and yow to longe to dwelle ;
 But the Troyanes gestes, as they felle,
 In Omer, or in Dares, or in Dite,³
 Who-so that kan may rede hem as they write.

But thogh that Grekes hem of Troye in
 shetten,
 And hire cite beseged alle aboute,
 Hire olde usage wolde they noght letten 15c
 As for to honour hire goddes, ful devoute ;
 But aldermost in honour, out of doute,
 They had a relyk heet Palladioun,⁴
 That was hire trist aboven everichoun.

And so byfel, whan comen was the tyme
 Of Averil, whan clothed is the mede
 With newe grene, of lusty Veer⁵ the prime,
 And swote smellen floures, white and rede ;
 In sondry wise shewed, as I rede.
 The folke of Troye hire observaunces olde, 16c
 Palladyones feste for to holde.

¹ Severely suffered. ² Wheel, whirl. ³ Homer, Dares Phrygius
 Ditis Historicus or Dictys Cretensis. ⁴ Statue of Pallas, upon the
 preservation of which depended the city's safety. ⁵ Spring.

And to the temple, in alle hire beste wise,
In general ther wente many a wyght
That thryfty was to heryn hire servise,
And namely so mony a lusti knyght,
So many a lady fresshe, and mayden bryght,
Ful wele byseyn, the moost and eke the leeste
Ye, bothe for the seson and the feeste.

Among thise other folke was Cryseyda,
In wydewes habit blak ; but natheles, 170
Right as oure ferste lettre is nowe an A,
In beaute firste so stode she makeles ;¹
Hire goodely lokkyng gladdened al the prees :
Nas nevere seyn thyng to ben preysed derre,²
Nor under cloude blake so bright a sterre,

As was Cryseyde, as folk seyde everychon,
That hire byhelden in hire blake wede ;
And yet she stood ful low and stille allone
Byhynden other folk in litel brede,³
And neygh the dore, ay under shames drede,⁴
Symple of atyre, and debonair of cheere, 181
Wyth ful asseured lokyng and manere.

Daun Troylus, as he was wont to gyde
His yonge knyghtes, lad hem up and down,
In thilke large temple on every syde,
Byholdyng ay the ladys of the town ;
Now here, now there, for no devocioun
Hadde he to non to reven⁵ him his reste,
But gan to preyse and lakken⁶ whom him leste.

¹ Peerless (literally, mateless). ² Dearer. ³ Breadth. ⁴ Constraint of modesty. ⁵ Bereave. ⁶ Depreciate.

And in his walk ful fast he gan to wayten,¹
 If knyght or sqwyer of his compaynye 191
 Gan for to sigh, or lete his eyen bayten²
 On any woman that he koude aspye;
 He wolde smyle, and holden it folye,
 And seye him thus: "God wote she slepeth
 softe

For love of the, whan thou turnest ful ofte;
 "I have herd telle, *pardieux*, of your lyvyng,
 Ye lovers, and youre lewde³ observaunce,
 And which a labour folk han in wynnynge 199
 Of love, and in the kepyng whiche doutaunce!⁴
 And when your preye is lost, wo and penaunce;
 O, verrey fooles! nice⁵ and blynde be ye;
 'There is not oon kan war by other be!'"

And with that worde he gan cast up his
 browe,
 Ascaunces,⁶ "Lo! is this nought wysely
 spoken?"

At whiche the god of Love gan loken rowe⁷
 Right for despit, and shope to ben y-wroken.
 He kydde⁸ anon his bowe nas not broken;
 For sodenly he hitte him atte fulle,
 And yet as proude a pocok can he pulle. 216

O blynde world! O blynd intencioun!
 How often falleth alle the effecte contrarie
 Of surquidrye⁹ and foule presumpcioun,
 For kaught is proud, and kaught is debonaire!

¹ Watch. ² Feast. ³ Ignorant. ⁴ What incertitude. ⁵ Unknown.
⁶ As if to say. ⁷ Rough. ⁸ Showed. ⁹ Arrogance.

This Troylus is clomben on the staire,
And litel weneth that he mote descende ;
But alday fayleth thinge that fooles wende.

As proude Bayard ¹ gynneth for to skyppe
Out of the wey, so priketh him his corne,
Til he a lassch have of the longe whippe, 220
Than thynketh he, "Thogh I prounce al by
forne

First in the trayse, ful fat and neue shorne,
Yet am I but an hors, and horses lawe
I mote endure, and with my feeres ² drawe."

So ferd it by this fiers and proude knyght,
Though he a worthy kynges sonne were,
And wende no thinge had had swiche myght,
Agens his wille, that shold his herte stiere ; ³
Yet with a look his herte wax a feere, ⁴
That he that now was moost in pride above,
Wax sodeynly most suget unto love. 231

Forthy ⁵ ensauple taketh of this man,
Ye wise, proude, and worthy folkes alle,
To scornen Love, whiche that so soone kan
The fredom of youre hertes to him thralle ;
For evere was, and evere shal befaller,
That Love is he that alle thinge may bynde ;
For may no man fordon the lawe of kynde. ⁶

That this be sothe hath proved and doth yett ;
For this trowe I ye knowen alie and some, 240
Men reden not that folk han gretter witte

¹ Brown horse. Cf. *Canterbury Tales*, l. 17,813. ² Mates. ³ Stir
▲-fire. ⁵ Wherefore. ⁶ Nature.

Than they that han ben most with love ynome ;
 And strengest folk ben therwith overcome,
 The worthiest and the grettest of degree ;
 This was and is, and yet men shal it see.

And treweliche it sitte wele to be so,
 For alderwysest² han therwith ben plesed,
 And they that han ben aldermost in wo,
 With love han ben confortid most and esed ;
 And oft it hath the cruel herte apesed, 250
 And worthy folk made worthier of name,
 And causeth most to dreden vice and shame.

Now sith³ it may not godely ben withstonde,
 And is a thinge so vertuous of kynde,
 Ne gruccheth not to Love for to ben bonde,
 Syn, as him-selven listè, he may you bynde !
 The yerde is bet that bowen wole and wynde⁴
 Than that that brest ;⁵ and therfor I you rede⁶
 To folowen him that so wele kan yow lede.

But for to tellen forthe in special, 260
 As of this kynges sone of which I tolde,
 And leten other thinge collateral,
 Of hym thenke I my tale forth to holde,
 Bothe of his joye, and of his cares colde,
 And alle his werk, as towchyng this matere,
 For I it gan, I wil therto refeere.⁷

Withinne the temple he wente him forth
 pleyinge,
 This Troylus, with every wyght aboute,

¹ Taken in. ² Wisest of all. ³ Since. ⁴ Bend, turn. ⁵ Breaketh
 Advise ⁷ Return.

On this lady and now on that lokynge,
Whereso she were of towne, or of withoute :
And upon cas bifel, that, thorgh a route, 271
His eyghe percede,¹ and so it depe wente,
Til on Cryseyde it smoot, and ther it stente ;

And sodeynly he wex ther-with astoned,
And gan hire bet biholde in thrifty wise :
"O verrey God !" thoughte he, "where hast-
ow woned,²

That ert so fair and goodely to devyse ? "
Ther-with his herte gan to sprede and ryse,
And softe sykede, lest men myght hym here,
And caughte ageyn his firste playinge chere.

She nas not with the leste of hire stature,
But alle hire lymes so wele answeyng 282
Weren to womanhode, that creature
Nas never lesse mannyssh in semyng.
And eke the pure wyse of hire mevyng³
Shewed wele, that men myght in hire gesse
Honor, estate, and womanly noblesse.

Tho Troylus, right wonder wele withalle,
Gan for to like hire mevyng and hire chere,
Whiche somdele deignous⁴ was, for she lete
falle 290

Hire loke a lite aside, in swiche manere
Ascaunces,⁵ "What ! may I nat stonden here ? "
And after that hire lokynge gan she lyghte,
That never thoughte hym seen so goode a sighte.

¹ Pierced. ² Dwelt. ³ The very manner of her moving.
Haughty. ⁵ As if to say. (The Italian is "*Quasi dicesse.*")

And of hire loke in him ther gan to quyken
 So grete desire, and swiche affeccioun,
 That in his hertes botme gan to stiken
 Of hire his fixe and depe impressioun :
 And though he erst hadde poured¹ up and
 doun, 299

He was tho gladde his hornes in to shrynke,
 Unnethes² wiste he how to loke or wynke.

Loo ! he that lete hymselfen so konnynge,³
 And scorned hem that loves peynes dryen,⁴
 Was ful unwar that Love hadde his dwellynge
 Withinne the subtile stremes of hir eyen ;
 That sodeynly hym thoughte he felte deyen,
 Ryght with hire loke, the spirit in his herte !
 Blissed be Love, that thus kan folk converte !

She, thus in blake, likyng⁵ to Troylus,
 Over alle thinge, he stode for to beholde ; 310
 Ne his desire, ne wherfor he stode thus,
 He neyther chere made, ne worde tolde ;
 But fram afer, his manere for to holde,⁶
 On other thinge his loke somtyme he caste,
 And oft on hire, while that the servise laste :

And after this, nat fully alle awhaped,⁷
 Out of the temple alle esyly he wente,
 Repentyng⁸ hym that he hadde ever i-japed
 Of Loves folke, lest fully the descente
 Of scorne fille on hymself ; but what he mente,
 Lest it were wiste on any maner syde, 321
 His wo he gan dissimulen and hyde.

¹ Peered. ² Scarcely. ³ Knowing. ⁴ Suffer. ⁵ Pleasing
 To keep up appearances. ⁷ Confounded. ⁸ Intended.

When he was fro the temple thus departed,
He streght anon unto the paleys torneth,
Right with hire loke thorgh shoten and thorgh
darted,

Al feyneth he in lust that he sojorneth,
And al his chere and speche also he borneth,¹
And ay of Loves servantes every while,
Him-self to were,² at hem he gan to smile ;

And seyde, " A, Lorde ! so ye lyve al in lest,³
Ye lovers, for the konnyngest of yow, 331
That serveth most ententifliche⁴ and best,
Hym tyt⁵ als often harme therof as prow ;⁶
Your hire is quyt ageyn, ye, God wote howe !
Nought wele for wele, but scorn for gode servise ;
In feithe yowr ordre⁷ is ruled in gode wyse.

" In non certeyn ben alle youre observaunces,
But it a sely⁸ fewe poyntes be,
Ne no thinge asketh so grete attendaunces,
As doth your lay,⁹ and that know alle ye : 340
But that is not the werste, as mote I the,¹⁰ —
But tolde I yow the werste poynt I leeve,¹¹
Al seyde I soth, ye wolden at me greve.

" But take this, — that¹² ye loveres oft es-
chewe,
Or elles don of goode intencioun,
Ful oft thi lady wol it misconstrewe,
And deme it harme in hyr opinioun ;
* And yit if she, for other encheson,¹³

¹ Restraineth (Fr. *borne*, a boundary, limit). ² Guard. ³ Pleas-
ure (lust). ⁴ Intently. ⁵ Betides. ⁶ Profit. ⁷ Class. (As religious
orders.) ⁸ Simple. ⁹ Law. ¹⁰ Thrive. ¹¹ Believe. ¹² That which
¹³ Occasion

Be wroth, than schalt thou have a groyn¹
 onon : 349

Lord ! wele is hym that may be of yow one ! ”

But for al this, when that he sey his tyme,
 He held his pees, non other boote him gaynede,
 For Love bigan his fetheres so to lyme,
 That wel unnethe unto his folk he feynede
 That other besye nedes him destreynede ;
 For wo was him, that what to don he nyste,
 But bad his folk to gon wher that hem liste.

And when that he in chaumber was allone,
 He doun upon his beddes feet him sette,
 And first he gan to syke, and eft to grone, 360
 And thoughte ay on hire so, withouten lette,
 That as he sate and woke, his spirit mette²
 That he hire saugh, and temple, and al the
 wyse

Right of hire loke, and gan it new avise.³

Thus gan he make a mirour of his mynde,⁴
 In whiche he saugh alle holly hire figure,
 And that he wel kouth in his herte fynde,
 It was to him a ryght goode aventure
 To love swich oon, and if he dydde his cure
 To serven hire, yet myght he falle in grace, 370
 Or elles, for oon of hir servauntes pace.

Ymaginyng that travaille nor grame⁵
 Ne myghte for so goodely one be lorne
 As she ; ne him for his desire no shame,

¹ Stal. ² Dreamt. ³ Consider. ⁴ Cf. *Romaunt of the Rose* 2806. This metaphor is not in the *Filostrato*. ⁵ Grief.

Al were it wiste, but in pris¹ and upborne
Of alle lovers, wele more than byforne ;
Thus argumentede he, in his gynnyng,
Ful unavised of his wo comyng.

Thus toke he purpos Loves craft to sewe,²
And thought he wolde wirche prively, 380
First to hiden his desire al in mew³
From every wyght yborne, alle outrelly,
But he myght aught recovered be therby ;
Rememberynge him, that love to wyde yblowe
Yelt⁴ bitter fruyt, thoughe swete sede be sowe.

And over al this yet muchel more he thoghte
What for to speke, and what to holden inne,
And what to arten ;⁵ hire to love he soughte,
And on a songe anon-ryght to bigynne,
And gan loude on his sorwe for to wyne ;⁶ 390
For with goode hope he gan fully assente
Cryseyde for to love, and nought repente.

And of his songe nought only the sentence,⁷
As write myn auctour called Lollius,⁸
But pleynly, save our tonges difference,
I dar wel seyn in alle, that Troylus
Seyde in his songe, loo, every word right thus
As I shal seyn ; and who-so liste it here,
Lo, next this vers, he may it tynde there.

¹ Praise. ² Pursue. ³ A place of confinement. The crown stud is now kept in "mews" in London. ⁴ Yieldeth. ⁵ Urge (*Lat. certare*). ⁶ Struggle (and gain). ⁷ Meaning. ⁸ Boccaccio does not refer to this author. He is still unknown. Cf. v. 1667; and *House of Fame*, iii. 378.

The Song of Troylus.

If no love is, O God, what fele I so? 400
And if love is, what thinge and whiche is he?
If love be gode, from whennes comth my wo?
If it be wykke, a wonder thynketh me,
Whenne every torment and adversite,
That cometh of him, may to me savory thynke;
For ay thirst I the more that Iche it drynke.

And if that in myn owne lust I brenne,
From whennes cometh my wailynge and my pleynte?
If harme agree me, whereto pleyne I thenne?
I noot ne why, unwery, that I feynte. 410
O quyke¹ deth! O swete harm so queynthe!
How may I se in me swiche quantite!
But if that I consente that it so be?

And if that I consente, I wrongefully
Compleyne ywis: thus possed² to and fro,
Al sterelees³ withinne a boot am I
Amyd the see, betwixen windes two,
That in contrarie standen ever mo.
Allas! what is this wonder maladye?
For hete of cold, for cold of hete I dye.⁴ 420

And to the god of love thus seyde he
 With pitous voys, "O Lord, now youres is
 My spirit, whiche ay aughte youres be;

¹ Living. ² Pushed. ³ Rudderless. ⁴ This song is not in *Bocaccio*, but is a version of the eighty-eighth sonnet of Petrarch.

Yow thanke I, Lord, that have me brought to
this ;

But whether goddesse or womman, ywys,¹
She be, I not,² which that ye do³ me serve ;
But as hire man I wol ay lyve and sterve.

“ Ye stonden in hire eyen mightyly,
As in a place unto your vertu digne :
Wherfore, Lord, if my servise or I 430
May liken⁴ yow, so beth to me benigne ;
For myn estate roial here I resigne
Into hire hond, and with ful humble chere
Bycome hire man, as to my lady dere.”

In hym ne deynede sparen blode roial
The fir of love, — ye, wherfro God me blisse ! —
Ne him forbar in no degre, for al
His vertu, or his excellent prowesse ;
But held hym as his thral low in destresse,
And brent⁵ hym so in sondry wyse ay newe,
That sixty tyme a day he lost his hewe. 441

So muchel day by day his owne thought,
For lust to hire, gan quiken and encresse,
That every other charge he sett at nought,
Forthy⁶ ful oft, his hote fir to cesse,
To sene hire goodely loke he gan to presse ;⁷
For therby to ben esed wele he wende,⁸
And ay the ner⁹ he was, the more he brende.
For evere ner the fir the hotter is,

¹ Truly. ² Know not. ³ Cause. ⁴ Please. ⁵ Burnt. ⁶ Where
to. ⁷ Press. ⁸ Thought. ⁹ Nearer

This, trowe I, knoweth al this companye: 45^c
 But were he fer or nere, I dar seye this,
 By nyght or day, for wisdom or folye,
 His herte — which that is his brestes eye —
 Was evere on hire, that fairer was to sene
 Than evere were Elyne or Polixene.¹

Ek of the day ther passede noght an houre,
 'That to himself a thowsand tyme he seyde,
 "Gode godely, to whom serve I and laboure
 As I best kan, now wolde God, Cryseyde,
 Ye wolden on me rew er that I dyede! 46^o
 My deere herte! allas, myn hele and hewe, —
 My lyst ² is lost, but ye wol on me rewe."

Alle other dredes weryn from hym fledde,
 Bothe of thassege ³ and his savacioun;
 Nin ⁴ his desire none other fantasye bredde,
 But argumentes to this conclusioun,
 That she of him wolde han compassioun,
 And he to ben hire man whil he may dure,
 Lo, here his lif, and from the deth his cure.

The sharppe shoures felle of armes preve,⁵
 'That Ector or his othere bretheren diden, 47¹
 Ne made hym oonly therefor ones meve,
 And yet was he, wher-so men went or riden,
 Founde oon the best, and lengest tyme abiden
 Ther peril was, and dide eke swiche travaile
 In armes, that to thynke it was mervaille.

¹ Polyxena, sacrificed to the manes of Achilles by Pyrrhus (*Canterbury Tales*, l. 4710). See Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, book xiii., fab. 471.
² My health, color, pleasure. ³ Boccaccio has "the great war."
 Nor in. ⁵ Prove.

But for none hate he to the Grekes hadde,
 Ne also for the rescous¹ of the town,
 Ne made him thus in armes for to madde,²
 But oonly, lo, for this conclusioun, 480
 To liken³ hire the bette for his renoun :
 Fro day to day in armes so he spedde,
 That al the Grekes as the deth him dredde.

And fro this forth tho reft him love his slepe
 And made his mete his foo ; and eke his sorwe
 Gan multiplie, that who-so toke kepe,
 It shewed in his hewe bothe eve and morwe ;
 Therefore a tittle he gan him for to borwe
 Of other sikennesse, lest men of him wende
 That the hote fire of love him brend ; 490

And seyde he hadde a fevyr, and ferde amys ;
 But howe it was certeyn kan I not seye,
 If that his lady understode nat this,
 Or feyned hir she nyste,⁴ on of the tweye :
 But wele I rede, that by no maner weye
 Ne semed it as that she of him roughte,
 Or of his peyne, or what-so evere he thoughte.

But than felte this Troylus swiche wo
 That he was wel nyghe wode,⁵ for ay his drede
 Was this, that she som wyght hadde loved so,
 That never of him she wold have taken hede ;
 For whiche him thought he felt his herte blede,
 Ne of his wo ne dorst he nat bygynne 503
 To tellen hire, for al this world to wyne.

But when he hadde a space from his care,

¹ Deliverance. ² Fight madly ³ Please. ⁴ Did not ⁵ Crazed.
 cad.

Thus to himself ful oft he gan compleyne :
 He sayde, " O fole ! now artow in the snare,
 That whilom japedest at loves peyne,
 Now artow hent,¹ now gnawe thin owne cheyne,
 Thow were ay wont eche love-reprehende 510
 Of thing fro which thow kanst the nat defende.

" What wol now everyche lover seyn of the,
 If this be wiste ? But evere in thin absence
 Laughen in scorne, and seyn, ' Loo, ther gothe
 he

That is the man of so grete sapience,
 And held us lovers leest in reverence !
 Now, thanketh God, he may gone in the daunce
 Of him that Love liste fiebly for tavaunce !'

" But O ! thow woful Troylus, God wolde, —
 Seth thow most loven, thorgh thi desteyne, —
 That thow bysette were on swich on that sholde
 Know al thy wo, al lacked hire² pite : 522
 But also colde in love towards the
 Thi lady is as froost in wynter Mone,
 And thow fordoon as snowe in fire is soone.

" God wold I were aryved in the porte
 Of deth, to which my sorow wol me lede !
 A, lord ! to me it were a grete comforte,
 Than were I qwyte of langwysshynge in drede ;
 For be myn hidde sorowe yblowe on brede,³
 I shal byjaped ben a thowsand tyme 531
 More than that fool of whos folye men ryme.⁴

" But now help, God, and ye, swete, for whom

¹ Taken. ² Although she lacked. ³ Blown abroad. ⁴ Boccaccio makes no particular reference here, but Chaucer seems to have had an individual "fool" in mind.

I pleyne, ycaught ye never wyght so faste !
 O mercy, dere hert, and help me from
 The deth, for I, whil that my lif may laste,
 More than my-self wol love yow to my laste ;
 And with some freendly loke gladdeth me,
 swete,

Thogh nevere more thyng ye me byhete."¹

Thise wordes and ful many another mo 540
 He spak, and cleped evere in his compleynte
 Hire name, for to tellen hire his wo,
 Tyl neigh that he in salte teris dreynte ;²
 Al was for noght, she herde not his pleynte ;
 And when that he bithought on that folye,
 A thousand folde his wo gan multiplie.

Bewayllynge in his chaumber thus allone,
 A frende of his, that called was Pandare,³
 Came in unwar, and herde hym thus grone,
 And seye⁴ his freende in swich distresse and
 care ; 550

"Allas," quod he, "who causeth al this fare ?
 O mercy God, what unhap may this mene ?
 Han now thus soone Grekes made yow leene ?

"Or hastow som remors of conscience ?
 And art now falle in some devocioun,
 And waylest for thy synne and thin offence,
 And hast for ferde caught attricioun ?
 God save hem that biseged han oure toun,
 And so kan leye oure jolyte on presse,
 And brynge oure lusty folk to molynesse !" 560

¹ Promise. ² Drowned. ³ Boccaccio calls him "a young Trojan
 of high lineage and great courage." ⁴ Saw.

Thise wordes seyde he for the nones alle,
That with swiche thinge he myght him angry
 maken,

And with an angre don ¹ his wo to falle,
As for the tyme, and his courage awake ;
But wele he wyste, as fer as tonges spake,
Ther nas a man of gretter hardinesse
Than he, ne more desired worthinesse.

“What cas,” ² quod Troylus, “or what aven-
 ture

Hath gyded the to sen me languysshinge,
That am refus of every creature ? 570
But for the love of God, at my prayinge
Go henne away, for certys my deyinge
Wol the disese,³ and I mote nedes deye ;
Therfor go wey ; ther is no more to seye.

“But if thow wene I be thus sik for drede,
It is not so, and therefore scorne nought ;
Ther is an other thyng I take of hede,
Wel more than aught the Grekes han ywroght,
Whiche cause is of my dethe for sorw and
 thought ;

But thogh I telle it not the now at leste, 580
Be thow noght wroth, I hide it for the beste.”

This Pandare, that neyghe malte ⁴ for wo
 and routhe,

Ful often seyde, “Allas, what may this be ?
Now, frende,” quod he, “if evere love or trouthe
Hath ben or is bytwixen the and me,

¹ Cause. ² Chance. ³ Discomfort, pain. ⁴ Melted.

Ne do thou nevere swiche a cruelte,
 To hyden fro thy frende so grete a care ;
 Wostow not wele that it am I, Pandare ?

“ I wille parten¹ with the al thy peyne,
 If it be so I do the eny comfort, 590
 As it is frendes right, soth for to seyne,
 To parten wo, as gladly as desport ;
 I have and schal, for trew or fals report,
 In wronge and right ylovede the al my lyve ;
 Hide nat fro me thy woo, but telle it bilyve.”

Tho gan this sorwful Troylus to syke,
 And seyde him thus : “ God leve it be my best
 To telle it the, forsyth it may the like,
 Yet wil I telle it or myn herte to-breste,
 And wele wote I thou mayst do me no reste ;
 But leste thou deme I tryste not to the, 601
 Now herkne, frende, for thus it stant with me.

“ Love, ageins the which who so defendeth
 Him-selven most him alderlest² availleth,
 With dессespoir³ so sorwfully me offendeth
 That streght unto the deth myn herte sailleth ;
 Therto desire so brennyngly massailleth,
 That to ben slayn, it were a gretter joye
 To me, than kyng to be of Grece and Troye.

“ Suffiseth this, my fulle frend Pandare, 610
 That I have seyde, for now wostow my wo ;
 And, for the love of God, my colde care
 So hide it wele, I tolde it nevere to mo ;
 For harmes myghten folwen mo than two,

¹ Share. ² Least of all. ³ Despair

If it were wiste, but be thow in gladnesse,
And lat me sterve,¹ unknow, of my destresse."

"How hast thow thus unkyndely and longe
Hidde this fro me, thow fool?" quod Pandarus.
"Paraunter thow myght after swiche oon longe,²
That myn avys anon may helpen us." 620

"This were a wonder thinge," quod Troylus,
"Thow coudest nevere in love thi-selven wysse,³
How devel maystow brynge me to blysse?"

"Ye, Troylus, herke now," quod Pandare,
"Though I be nyse;⁴ it happeth often so,
That oon that excesse⁵ doth ful yvele fare,
By goode conseyl kan kepe his frende ther fro:
I have my-self eke seyen a blynde man go
Ther as he fel that coude loken wyde;
A fool may eke a wise man ofte gyde." 630

"A wheston⁶ is no kervynge instrument,
But yet it maketh sharpe kervynge tolis,
And ther thow wost I have aught myswent,
Eschewe thow that, for swich thinge to the
scole is.

Thus oughte wise men ben ware of folis;
If thow so do thy witte is wele bywarded;
By his contrarye is every thinge declared.

"For how myght evere swetenesse han ben
knowe

To hym that nevere tastede bitternesse?
Ne no man may ben inly glad, I trowe," 640

¹ Die. ² Long after such an one. ³ Direct. ⁴ Ignorant. ⁵ D.s. case (access, a sudden attack, a fever). ⁶ Whetstone. The passage from l. 631 to l. 854 is mostly original with Chaucer.

That nevere was in sorwe or som destresse :
Eke whit by blak, eke shame by worthynes,
Eche, sett by other, more for other semeth,
As men may se ; and so the clerkes demeth.

“ Sith thus of two contraries is o loore,
I, that have in love so oft asayed
Grevauces, oughte konne, and wele the more
Conseyllen the of that thow ert dismayed ;
Eke the ne aughte not ben yvel apayed,¹
Thogh I desire with the for to bere 650
Thin hevy charge, it shal the lesse dere.²

“ I wote wele that it fareth thus by me,
As to thy brother Paris, — an hierdesse,
Whiche that ycleped was Oenone,
Wroot in a compleynt of hire hevynesse :
Ye seye the lettre³ that she wroot, I gesse ? ”
“ Nay, nevere yet ywis,” quod Troylus.

“ Now,” quod Pandare, “ herken, it was thus :
“ ‘ Phoebus, that first fond art of⁴ medicine,
Quod she, ‘ and coude in every wyghtes care
Remede and rede, by herbes he knew fyne,
Yet to hymself his konnyng was ful bare, 662
For love had hym so bounden in a snare,
Al for the doughter of the kynge Admete,
That al his craft ne koude his sorwes beete.⁵

“ ‘ Right so fare I, unhappily for me !
I love oone beste, and that me smerteth soore ,
And yet paraunter kan I reden⁶ the

¹ Displeased. ² Hurt. ³ The letter of the naiad (“ hierdesse,” shepherdess) Œnone is in the *Heroides* of Ovid. Lines 659-679 are a very free version of its concluding paragraph. ⁴ Discovered the art. ⁵ Alleviate (O. F. *betan*). ⁶ Advise.

And nat myselfe ; reprove me no more,
 I have no cause, I wote wele, for to sore 67c
 As doth an hauk that listeth for to pleye,
 But to thy help yet somewhat kan I seye.

“ ‘ And of o thyng ryght siker¹ maystow be,
 That certein for to dyen in the peyne,²
 That I shal never mo discoveren the ;
 Ne, by my trouthe, I kepe nat³ restreyne
 The fro thy love, thogh that it were Eleyne,
 That is thy brother wyf, if I it wiste ;
 Be what she be, and love hyre as the liste.’

“ Therfor as frend fulliche in me asseure,
 And tel me plat what is the enchesoun⁴ 681
 And final cause of wo that ye endure ;
 For, douteth nothings, myn intencioun
 Nys nat to yow of reprehencioun
 To speke as now, for nothings may bireve
 A man to love, til that hym list beleve.

“ And wyteth wele, that both two ben vices,
 Mystrowen⁵ alle, or ellis alle to leve ;⁶
 But wele I wote, the mene of it no vice is ;
 For for to trusten som wyght is a preve 690
 Of trouthe, and forthy wold I fayne remeve
 Thy wronge conceyte, and do the⁷ som wyght
 triste

Thy wo to telle : and tel me if the liste.

“ The wise seith, ‘ Wo hym that is allone,

¹ Sure. ² Torture. Cf. iii. 1502. ³ Care not. ⁴ Occasion. ⁵ Mis-
 trust. ⁶ Believe. ⁷ Cause thee.

For, and he falle, he hath non helpe to ryse ;'
 And sith thow hast a felow, tel thi moone,
 For this, certeyne, nis naught the nexte wise
 To wynnen love, as techen us the wyse,
 To walow and wepe, as Nyobe¹ the quene,
 Whos teerys yet in marble ben yseene. 700

"Lat be thy wepynge and thy drerynesse,
 And lat us lessen wo with oother speeche,
 So may thy woful tyme seme lesse ;
 Delite not in wo, thy wo to seche,
 As doon this fooles that hire sorw eche²
 With sorowe, when they han mysaventure,
 And listen nought to seche hem oother cure.

"Men seyn, to wrecche is consolacioun
 To have another felaw in his payne :
 That oughte wele ben oure opynyoun, 710
 For bothen thow and I of love we pleyne ;
 So ful of sorw am I, the soth to seyn,
 That certainly no more harde grace
 May sitte on me, for-why there is no space.

"If God wil, thow art nought agast of me,
 Lest I wold of thy lady the begile :
 Thow woste thy-self whom that I love, *parde*,
 As I best kan, gon sithen longe while ;
 And sith thow wost I do it for no wile,
 And sith I am he that thow tristest moost, 720
 Tel me somewhat, syn that my wo thow woste."

¹ Niobe, daughter of one of the Pleiades, affronting Latona, was borne by a whirlwind to the top of a mountain and changed to a stone which still weeps tears. See Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, book vi. ² Eke. increase (O E. *eche*, *okeren*, increase; *oker*, usury).

Yet Troylus for al this no worde sayde,
 But longe he lay as stille as he dede were ;
 And after this with sikynge he abreyde,¹
 And to Pandarus voice he lente his ere,
 And up his eighen cast he, that in feere
 Was Pandarus leste that in frenesye,
 He sholde falle or elis sone dye,

And criede, "Awake !" ful wondurliche and
 scharpe ;

"What ? slombrestow as in a litargye ?"² 730
 Or artow like an asse to the harpe,
 That hereth soun, whan men the strenges plye,
 But in hys mynde of that no melodye
 May synken hym to gladden, for that he
 So dul is of his bestialitee ?"

And with that Pandare of his wordes stente,
 But Troylus hym nothyng yet answerde,
 For-why ? To tellen nas not his entente
 To nevere no man, for whom that he so ferde ,
 For it is seyde men maken oft a yerd³ 740
 With which the maker is hymself ybeten
 In sondry manere, as thise wyse⁴ treten.

And, namely,⁵ in his counseylle tellynge
 That toucheth love that oughte ben secree ;
 For of hymself it wol ynogh out sprynge,
 But-if that it the bette governed be.
 Eke it is craft som-tyme to seme fle
 Fro thyng which in effect men hunte faste :
 Al this in herte gan Troylus caste.

¹ Started up sighing. ² Lethargy. ³ Staff. Cf. *King Lear* act
 I, sc. 3, l. 170. ⁴ Wise ones. ⁵ Especially.

But nathelees, when he hadde herde him crye
 'Awake!' he gan to syken wonder sore, 751
 And seyde, "Frende, thoughe that I stil lye,
 I am not deaf, — now pees! and crye namore,
 For I have herde thy wordes and thy loore;
 But suffre me my myschief to bywaylle,
 For thy proverbes may me noght awaylle.

"Nor other cure kanstow none for me,
 Eke I nyl not ben cured, — I wol dye:
 What know I of the quene Nyobe?
 Lat be thin olde ensaumples, I the preye." 760
 "No," quod tho Pandarus, "therfore I seye,
 Swiche is delit of fooles to bewepe
 Hire wo, but seken boote they ne kepe.¹

"Now knowe I that resoun in the faileth:
 But tel me, if I wyste what she were
 For whom that al this misaventure ailleth,
 Dorstestow that I tolde in hire ere
 Thy wo, — syth thow darst noght thy-self, for
 feere, —

And hire bysought on the to han som routhe?"
 "Why, nay," quod he, "by God and by my
 trouthe!" 770

"What? nat as bisily," quod Pandarus,
 "As thogh myn owen lyfe lay on this nede?"
 "No certes, brother," quod this Troylus.
 "And why?" "For that thow sholdest nevere
 spede."

"Wostow that wele?" "Ye, that is out of
 drede,"

¹ Care not to seek remedy.

Quod Troylus, "for al that evere ye konne,
She nyl to noon swich wreche as I ben
wonne."

Quod Pandarus, "Allas ! what may this be,
That thou despaired art thus causelees ?
What ? lyveth nat thy lady, *benedicite* ! 780
How wostow ¹ so that thou art graceles ?
Swiche yvel is nat alwey bootelees : ²
Why, put nat impossible thus thy cure,
Syth thinge to come is oft in aventure !

"I graunte wele that thou endurest wo
As sharpe as doth he Syciphus ³ in helle,
Whos stomak fowles tyren ⁴ everemo,
That hyghten volturis as bokes telle ;
But I may not endure that thou dwelle
In so unskilful ⁵ an opynyon, 790
That of thy wo is no curacion.

"But oones nyltow, for thy coward herte,
And for thin ire, and foolysh wilfulnesse,
For wantruste ⁶ tellen of thy sorwes smerte,
Ne to thin owne help don besynesse,
As muche as speke a reson, more or lesse,
But lyste ⁷ as he that list of nothyng recche, —
What woman koude love swiche a wreche ?

"What may she demen oother of thy deeth,
If thou thus deye and she noot ⁸ why it is, 800
But that for feere is yolden up thy brethe,

¹ Knowest thou. ² Incurable. ³ Sisyphus was condemned to never-ending toil in hell, but it was Prometheus whose vitals the eagle tore for stealing fire from heaven. He was chained by Jove to Caucasus. ⁴ Tear (Fr. *tirer*, to pull). ⁵ Unreasonable. ⁶ Distrust. ⁷ L yest. ⁸ Know not.

For Grekis han biseged us, ywys ?
 Lord, which a thank than shaltow han for this !
 Thus wol she seyn and alle the toun atonees : ¹
 ‘The wreche is deed, the devel have his
 bones !’

‘Thou mayst allone here wepe and crye, and
 knele ;

But love a woman that she wote it nought,
 And she wol qwyte ² that thow shalt not feele :
 Unknowe, unkyst, and lost that is unsought.
 What ! many a man hath lov^e ful deere abought, ³
 Twenty wynter er that his lady wyste, 811
 That never yit his lady mouth he kyste.

“What ? sholde he therfor fallen in dispayr ?
 Or be recreaunt of his owne tene, ⁴
 Or sleen hymself, al be his lady faire ?
 Nay, nay, but evere in oone be fressh and grene,
 To serve and love his deere hertes queene,
 And thynke it is a guerdon hire to serve
 A thowsand folde moore than he kan deserve.”

And of that worde took hede Troylus, 820
 And thought anone what folye he was inne,
 And how that sothe hym seyde Pandarus,
 That for to slen hymself myghte he nat wynne,
 But bothe doon unmanhode and a synne,
 And of his deth his lady nought to wyte ; ⁵
 For of his wo, God wote, she knewe ful lyte.

And with that thought he gan ful soore syke,
 And seyde, “Allas, what is me beste to do ?”

¹ At once. ² Requite ³ Suffered. ⁴ Grief. ⁵ Know.

To whom Pandare answered, " If the lyke,
 The beste is that thow telle me al thy wo ; 830
 And have my trouthe, but thow it fynde so
 I be thy boote,¹ or that it be ful longe,
 To pieces do me draw, and sythen honge."²

" Ye, so thow seyst," quod Troylus tho,
 " allas !

But, God woote, it is noght the rather so :
 Ful harde it were to helpen in this cas,
 For wele fynde I that Fortune is my fo :
 Ne alle the men that ryden konne or go
 May of hire cruel whiel the harme withstonde,
 For, as hire luste, she pleyeth with fre and
 bonde." 84c

Quod Pandarus, " Than blamestow Fortune
 For thow art wrothe, ye, now at erst I se :
 Wostow nat wel that Fortune is comune
 To every maner wyght, in some degre ?
 And yet thow hast this comfort, lo, *parde*,
 That as hire joyes moten overgone,
 So mote hire sorwes passen everychone.

" For if hire whiel stynte any thinge to torne,
 Thanne cessed she Fortune anon to be :
 Now sith hire whiel by no way may sojorne,
 What wostow if hire mutabilite, 851
 Ryght as thy-selven list, wol don by the ?
 Or that she be noght fer fro thin helpynge ?
 Peraunter ³ thow hast cause for to synge.

" And therfor wostow what I the beseche ?

¹ Cure. ² Then hang (me). ³ Peradventure.

Lat be thi wo and tornynge to the grounde ;
 For who-so liste have helynge of his leche,¹
 To hym behoveth first unwry² his wounde :
 To Cerberus in helle ay be 1 bounde,
 Were it for my sustir al thine sorwe, 860
 By my wille she sholde al be thin to morwe.

“ Loke up ! I seye, and telle me what she is
 Anon, that I may gone aboute thy nede :
 Know ich hire ought ? for my love telle me this ;
 Thanne wolde I hope the rather³ for to spede.”
 Tho gan the veyne of Troylus to blede,
 For he was hit, and wex alle rede for shame ;
 “ Aha ! ” quod Pandare, “ here bygynneth
 game.”

And with that worde he gan hym for to shake,
 And seyde, “ Theef, thow shalt hir name
 telle ! ” 870

But tho gan sely Troylus for to quake,
 As though men sholde han led hym into helle.
 And seyde, “ Allas ! of al my wo the welle⁴
 Thanne is my swote foo called Cryseyde ; ”
 And wel neygh with that worde for feere he
 deyede.

And whan that Pandare herde hyre name
 nevene,⁵
 Lord ! he was glad, and seyde, “ Frende so dere,
 Now fare aright, for Joves name in hevene,
 Love hath byset the wel ; be of goode chere !
 For of good name, and wisdom, and manere

¹ Physician ² Uncover. ³ Sooner ⁴ Source. ⁵ Named.

She hath ynough, and eke of gentillesse :¹ 881
If she be fayre, thow wost thy-self, I gesse ;

“ Ne nevere saugh I a moore bounteouse²
Of hire estate, ne gladder, nor of speche
A frendlyer, ne a moore graciouse
For to do wel, ne lasse hadde nede to seche
What for to don ; and al this bet to eche
In honor to as fer as she may strecche,
A kynges herte semeth by hires a wreche.

“ And forthy loke of good comfort thow be ;
For certainly the ferste poynt is this, 891
Of noble corage, and wele ordeyne
A man to have pees with hymself, ywis :³
So oghtist thow ; for noght but good it is
To love wele, and in a worthy place ;
The oght not to clepe hit hap, but grace.

“ And also thynk, and therwith gladde the,
That syth thy lady vertuose is alle,
So folweth it that ther is som pyte
Amonge alle thise other in general ; 900
And forthy se that thow in speciale
Requere noght that is ageyns hir name,
For vertue streccheth noght hymself to shame.

“ But wele is me that ever I was borne,
That thou bisett art in so goode a place ;
For, by my trouth, in love I dorst have sworne,
The sholde nevere han tyd⁴ so fayre a grace ;
And wostow why ? for thow were wonte to chace

¹ Lineage, breeding. ² Good (Fr. *bonité*). The Italian is, however, “ high-spirited.” ³ Certainly. ⁴ Betided.

At Love in scorne, and for despite him calle
'Seint Ydiot,' 'Lorde of thise fooles alle.' 910

"How often hastow made thy nyce japes,
And seyde that Loves servauntz everichon
Of nycete ben verrey goddes apes ;¹
And some wolde munchen hire mete al allone,
Lyggyng a bedde, and make hem for to grone ;
And some thow seydest hadde a blaunche fe-
vere,²

And preydest God he sholde never kevere.³

"And som of hem took on hem for the colde,
More than ynough, so seydestow ful ofte ;
And some han feyned ofte tyme and tolde 920
How that they waken, whan they slepten softe,
And thus they wolde han brought hemself alofte,
And natheles were under atte laste ;
Thus seydestow, and japedest ful faste.

"Yet seydestow, that for the moore part
Thyse faytours⁴ wolden speke in general,
And thoughten that it was a syker art,
For faylinge, for taseyden over alle :
Now may I jape of the, if that I shalle ;
But natheles, though that I sholde deye, 930
That thow art noon of tho, I dorst wel seye.

"Now beet thy breest, and sey to god of love,
Thi grace, lord ! for now I me repente
If I misspake, for now my-self I love : '
Thus seye with al thin herte, in goode entente."

¹ Dupes. Cf. *Canterbury Tales*, l. 17,713. ² A white fever. They were pale from fasting. ³ P=cover. ⁴ Deceivers, scoundrel ragabonds.

Quod Troylus, "A ! lorde, I me consente,
And preye to the my japes to forgive,
And I shal nevermore whil that I lyve."

"Thow seyst wele," quod Pandare, "and
now I hope 939

That thow the goddes wrathe hast al apesed ;
And sithen thow hast wepen many a drope,
And seyde swiche thinge where-with thy god is
plesed,

Now wolde nevere God but thow were esed :
And thynke wele she of whom rist al thy wo,
Hereafter may thy comfort ben also.

"For thilke ground that bereth the wedes
wykke

Bereth eke thise holsom herbes, and ful ofte,
Nexthe the foule netle, rough and thikke,
The lilie waxeth, swote and smothe and softe ;
And next the valey is the hille alofte, 950
And nexthe the derke nyght the glade morwe,
And also joye is next the fyn of sorwe.

"Now looke that atempree be thy brydel,
And for the beste ay suffre to the tyde,
Or elles alle oure labour is on ydel ;
He hasteth wele, that wysly kan abyde ;
Be diligent and trewe, and ay wele hyde,
Be lusti, fre, persevere in thi servise,
And al is wele if thow werke in this wise.

"But he that parted is in every place 960
Is no wher hool, as writen clerkes wyse ;
What wonder is, thogh swiche on have no
grace ?

Eke wostow how it fareth of love servyse ?
As plaunte a tree or erb, in sondry wise,
And on the morwe pulle it up as bylyve,
No wonder is, though it may nevere thryve.¹

“ And sith that god of love hath the bystowede
In place digne unto thy worthynesse,
Stonde faste, for to goode port hastow rowede,
And of thyself, for any hevynesse, 970
Hope alwey wele ; for, but-if drerinesse ²
Or over-haste our bothe laboure schende,³
I hope of this to maken a ful gode ende.

“ And wostow why I am the lesse afered,
Of this mater with my nece to trete ?
For this have I herde seyde of olde lered,⁴
Was never man or woman yet bigete,
That was unapt to soferen loves hete
Celestial, or elles love of kynde ;
Forthy, som grace I hope in hire to fynde. 980

“ And for to speke of hyre in special,
Hyre beaute to bethynken, and hyre youthe,
It sitt hire noght to ben celestial
As yet, thogh that hir bothe lyste and kouthe :⁵
But, trewly, it site hire wel ryght nouthe ⁶
A worthy knyght to loven and cherice,
And but she do, I holde it for a vice.

“ Wherfor I am, and wol ben, ay redy
To peynen me⁷ to do yow this servyse ;
For bothe yow to please, this hope I 990

¹ Lines 904-967 are Chaucer's invention, there being nothing corresponding to them in Boccaccio. ² Sorrow. ³ Ruin. ⁴ Learned men. ⁵ Wished and could. ⁶ Now. ⁷ Take pains.

Herefterwarde ; for ye ben bothe wyse,
 And konne conseyle kepe in swiche a wyse,
 That no man shal the wyser of it be,
 And so we maye ben gladded alle thre.

“ And by my trouthe I have right now of the
 A good conceyte in my wit, as I gesse,
 And what it is I wol now that thow se ;
 I thenke that, sith Love of his godenesse
 Hath the converted oute of wikkydnesse, 999
 That thow shalt ben the beste post, I leeve,¹
 Of alle his lay,² and moost his foes to greve.

“ Ensaumple why se now : this wyse clerkes,
 That erren aldermost agayn³ al lawe,
 And ben converted from hire wikked werkes
 Thorgh grace of God, that list hem to him
 drawe,

Than are they folk that han moost God in awe,
 And strengest feythed ben,⁴ I understonde,
 And konne an erreure alderbeste withstonde.”

When Troylus had herd Pandare assented
 To ben his help in lovyng of Creseyde, 1010
 Weex of his wo, as who seyth,⁵ untormented,
 But hotter wex his love ; and thus he seyde
 With sobre chere, al-though his herte pleyde :

“ Now, blisful Venus, helpe or that I sterve,
 Of the, Pandare, I mowe som thanke deserve ;

“ But, dere frend, how shal my wo be lesse,
 Til this be don ? and goode eke telle me this,

¹ Believe. ² Law. ³ Run most of all against. ⁴ “The greater
 he sinner the greater the saint.” ⁵ As it were.

How woltow seyn of me and my destresse
 Leste she be wroth ? — this drede I moost ywis,
 Or nyl not here or trowen howe it is ; 1020
 Al this drede I, and eke for the manere
 Of the, hire eme,¹ she nyl no swich thinge
 here."

Quod Pandarus, "Thow hast a ful grete care,
 Lest that the cherl may falle out of the moone !
 Why, lord ! I hate of the thy nice fare !
 Why entremette² of that thou hast to doone ?³
 For Goodes love, I bydde the a boone,⁴
 So let malon,⁵ and it shal be thy best."
 "Why, frend," quod he, "now do right as the
 leste.

"But herke, Pandare, o worde, for I nolde
 That thou in me wendest so grete foly, 1031
 That to my lady I desyren scholde
 That toucheth harme, or any vilanye ;⁶
 For, dredeles, me were levere deye,
 Than she of me aught ellis understode,
 But that that myghte sownen into⁷ goode."

Tho lough this Pandare, and anon answerde,
 "And I thy borwe !⁸ fy ! no wyght dothe but so ;
 I roghte⁹ nought thogh that she stode and herde
 How that thou seyste ; but farewel, I wol go ;
 Adieu, be glad, God spede us bothe two ! 1041
 Gif me this labour and this bysynesse,
 And of my speede¹⁰ be thin alle that swette-
 nesse."

¹ Uncle. ² Meddle. ³ Thou hast to do in the future, or that thou hast *not* to do. The readings vary. ⁴ Ask thee a boon. ⁵ Me alone. Dishonor. ⁷ Tend to. ⁸ Surety. ⁹ Cared. ¹⁰ Success.

Tho Troylus gan doun on knees to falle,
 And Pandare in his armes hente ¹ faste,
 And seyde, "Now fy on the Grekes alle!
 Yet, *pardee*, God shal help us at the laste,
 And dredelees, if that my lif may laste,
 And God toforne, lo som of hem shal smerte;
 And yet mathynketh this avaunt me sterte."²

"Now, Pandare, I ne kan no more seye, 1051
 But, thow wist, thow canst, thow mayst, thow
 art alle :

My lyf, my deth, hool in thin honde I leye!
 Helpe now," quod he. "Yis, by my trouthe,
 I shal."

"God yelde ³ the, frend, and this in special,"
 Quod Troylus, "that thow me recomaunde
 To hire that to the deeth may me comaunde."

This Pandarus tho, desyrous to serve
 His fulle frend, than seyde in this manere :
 "Farwele, and thenk I wole thy thank deserve.
 Have here my trouthe, and that thow shalt wele
 here ;" 1061

And went his wey, thenkyng on this matere,
 And how he best myghte hire beseche grace,
 And fynde a tyme therto and a place ;

For every wight that hath an house to founde,
 Ne renneth noght the werk for to bygynne
 With rakel ⁵ hond, but he wol byde a stounde,⁶
 And sende his hertes lyne out fro withinne.

¹ Caught. ² This boast escaped me in a moment of excitement.
³ Requite. ⁴ Cf. i. 1015. ⁵ Rash. ⁶ Wait a while.

Alderfirste his purpos for to wynne :
 Al this Pandare in his herte thoughte, 1070
 And caste ¹ his werk ful wysly ar he wroughte.

But Troylus lay tho no lenger doun,
 But up anone upon his steede bay,
 And in the feelde he pleyde the leoune ;
 Wo was the Grek that with hym mette that day !
 And in the town, his name sprong ² forth ay
 So goodely was, and gat hym so much grace,
 That ech hym lovede that looked on his face.

For he bycome the frendlyeste wyght,
 The gentylest, and eke the mooste fre, 1080
 The thriftiest, and one the beste knyght
 That in his tyme was, or myghte be :
 Dede were his japes and his crueltee,
 His hieghe porte and his manere estraunge,
 And ech of hem gan for a vertu chaunge.

Now lat us stynte of Troylus a stounde,
 That fareth lyk a man that hurte is soore,
 And is somedeel of akyng of his wounde
 Ylissed ³ wel, but heeled no deel more ;
 And, as an esy pacient, the loore 1090
 Abit ⁴ of hym that gothe aboute his cure ;
 And thus he dryveth forth his aventure.⁵

¹ Planned. ² Cf. *Canterbury Tales*, l. 1437. ³ Eased. ⁴ Abideth.
 Lines 1065-1092 are not in Boccaccio.

SECOND BOOK.

Proem.

Out of this blake wawes for to saylle,
 O wynde, O wynde, the weder gynneth clere ;
 For in this see the boot hath swiche travaylle
 Of my connyng, that unnethe¹ I it stere :
 This "see" clepe I the tempestous matere
 Of desespeyre,² that Troylus was inne ;
 But now of hope the kalendes³ bigynne.

O lady myn, that called art Cleo,⁴
 Thow be my spede fro this forth, and my Muse
 To ryme wel, this book tyl I have do ; 10
 Me nedeth here noon oother art to use ;
 For-why to every lover I me excuse,
 That of no sentement⁵ I this endyte,
 But out of Latyn⁶ in my tonge it write.

Wherfor I nyl have neyther thanke ne blame
 Of al this werk, but preye yow mekely,
 Desblameth⁷ me, if any worde be lame,
 For as myn auctor seyde, so seye I :
 Eke though I speke of love unfelyngly,
 No wonder is, for it no thing of new is, — 20
 A blynde man kan nat juggen wel in hewis.

Ye knowe eke that in forme of speche is
 chaunge

¹ Scarcely. ² Despair (Fr. *désespoir*). ³ A new and hopeful period. ⁴ Clio, the Muse of history. ⁵ Imagination. ⁶ This may be a reference to the unknown Lollius. See i. 394. ⁷ Excuse

Withinne a thousand yere, and wordes tho¹
 That hadden prys, now wonder nyce and
 straunge

Us thynketh hem,² and yet they spake hem so,
 And spedde as wele in love, as men now do :
 Eke for to wynnen love, in sondry ages,
 In sondry londes sondry ben usages.

And forthy, if it happe in any wyse,
 That heere be any lover in this place, 30
 That herkeneth as the story wol devise,
 How Troylus cam to his lady grace,
 And thynketh, " So nolde nat I love purchase,"³
 Or wondreth on his speche or his doynge,
 I not ;⁴ but it is to me no wondrynge ;

For every wyght whiche that to Rome wente
 Halt nat o path, or alwey o manere ;
 Eke in some londe were al the game yshente,⁵
 If that they ferde in love as men doon here,
 As thus, in opyn delynge or in chere, 40
 In visitynge, in forme, or seyinge hire sawes ;
 For-thy, men seyn, eche contree hath his lawes.

Eke scarsly ben ther in this place thre,
 That han in love seyde lik and done in alle ;
 For to thy purpos this may liken⁶ the
 And me right noght, yet al is seyde or shalle ;
 Eke some men grave in tree, some in ston walle,
 As it bitit ;⁷ but syn I have bigonne,
 Myn auctour shal I folwen, if I konne.

¹ Then. ² Words formerly prized are now vulgar and out-landish.
³ Obtain (successfully chase). ⁴ Know not. ⁵ Game lost. ⁶ Please
 Besides, happens.

The Story.

In May, that moder is of monthes gladde,
 That fressche floures blew, and white, and rede.
 Be quike ageyne, that winter dede made, 52
 And ful of baume is fletynge¹ every mede ;
 When Phebus dothe his bryghte bemes sprede,
 Ryght in the white Bool² it so bytydde
 As I shal synge, — on Mayes day the thridd, —

That Pandarus, for alle his wyse speche,
 Felt eke his part of Loves shotes keene,
 That, koude he never so wel of lovyng preche,
 It made his hewe a day ful ofte grene ;³ 60
 So shope it, that hym fil that day a tene⁴
 In love, for whiche in wo to bedde he wente,
 And made or it was day ful many a wente.⁵

The swalwe Proignee,⁶ with a sorwful lay,
 Whan morwe com, gan make hire wayment
 ynge⁷
 Why she forshapen⁸ was ; and ever lay
 Pandare abedde, half in a slomberryng,
 Til she so nygh hym made hire chiteringe,
 How Tereus gan forth hire suster take,
 That with the noyse of hire he gan awake, 70
 And gan to calle, and dresen⁹ hym to ryse,
 Remembryng hym his erand was to done

¹ Floating (in the air). ² The sign Taurus. ³ Cf. *Twelfth Night* act ii., sc. 4, l. 116. ⁴ Grief. ⁵ Turn. ⁶ Progne, wife of Tereus was turned into a swallow, and her sister Philomela into a nightingale. *Metamorphoses*, book vi., fable 6. ⁷ Lamenting. ⁸ Transformed. ⁹ Address, prepare.

From Troylus, and eke his grete emprise ;¹
And caste,² and knew in goode plyte ³ was the
moone

To doon viage, and take his way ful sone
Unto his neces paleys ther bysyde :
Now Janus, god of entree,⁴ thow hym gyde !

When he was com unto his neces place,
“ Where is my lady ? ” to hire folk quod he,
And they him tolde, and he forth in gan pace ;
And fond two other ladys sete and she, 81
Withinne a paved parlour, and they thre
Herden a maydyn reden hem the geeste
Of the Segee of Thebes,⁵ whil hem leste.

Quod Pandarus, “ Madame, God yow see,
With al youre faire book, and alle the cum-
paignye.”

“ Ey, uncle myn, welcome ywis ! ” quod she,
And up she roos, and by the hond in hye ⁶
She took hym fast, and seyde, “ This nyght
thrye,⁷ —

To goode mote it torne ! — of yow I mette : ”
And with that worde, she down on bench hym
sette. 91

“ Ye, nece, ye shal faren wel the bette,
If God wole, all this yere,” quod Pandarus ;
“ But I am sory that I have yow lette ⁸
To herkennen of youre book ye preysen thus :

¹ Enterprise. ² Made an astrological calculation. ³ “ Aspect.”
God of gates, beginnings and entrances. ⁴ A popular romance in
twelve books, — the *Thebais*, by Statius. Cf. *Canterbury Tales*. l
2294. ⁵ Haste. ⁶ Thrice. ⁷ Hindered

For Goddes love, what seyth it? tel it us, —
Is it of love? of som goode ye me leere.”

“Uncle,” quod she, “your maistresse is nat
heere!”

With that they gonnen laugh, and tho she
seyde,

“Thys romaunce is of Thebes that we rede,
And we han herd how that kynge Layus¹
deyede 101

Thorgh Edippus his sone, and al that dede :
And heere we stynten at thise letteres rede,
How that the bysshop, as the book gan telle,
Amphyorax,² fil thorgh the grounde to helle.”

Quod Pandarus, “Al this know I my-selve,
And alle thassege of Thebes, and the care,
For herof ben ther maked bokes twelve ;
But lat be this, and tel me how ye fare : 109
Do wey your barbe,³ and shew youre face bare.
Do wey your book, ryse up and let us daunce,
And lat us do to May som observaunce.”

“Ey! God forbede!” quod she, “be ye
mad?

Is that a wydowes lyf, so God yow save?
By Jove, ye maken me right soore adrad ;
Ye ben so wylde it semeth as ye rave !
It sate me wel bet ay in a cave
To byde, and rede on holy seyntes lyves :
Lat maydens gon to daunce, and yonge wyves.

¹ The *Thebais* celebrates the expedition of the Seven against Thebes. Œdipus was a son of Laius, and the father of Eteocles, Polynices, and others. ² Amphiaraus, the seer, whom the earth swallowed. He had foreseen the unfortunate issue of the war. ³ A mourning muffler covering the lower part of the face.

"As evere thryve I," quod this Pandarus,
 "Yet koude I telle a thyng to don yow pleye!"
 "Now, uncle deere," quod she, "telle it us 122
 For Goddes love; is thanne thassege aweye?
 I am of Grekes so ferde, that I deye."

"Nay nay," quod he, "as evere mote I thryve,
 It is a thyng wel bet than swiche fyve."¹

"Ye, holy God!" quod she, "what thing is
 that?"

What? 'bet than swiche fyve'? Ey, nay ywis!
 For al this worlde ne kan I reden what
 It sholde ben, — som jape I trow is this, 130
 And but youre-selven telle us what it is,
 My wit is for tareded² it al to leene;
 As helpe me God, I not noght what ye mene."

"And I youre borwe,³ ne nevere shal, for
 me,

This thyng be told to yow, as mote I thryve!"
 "And why so, uncle myn? why so?" quod she.
 "By God," quod he, "that wil I telle as blyve;
 For pruder⁴ womman is there noon on lyve, —
 And ye it wist, — in al the toun of Troye;
 I jape nought, as ever have I joye." 140

Tho gan she wondren moore than byforn
 A thousand folde, and down hire eyen caste;
 For nevere, sith tyme that she was born,
 To knowe thyng desired she so faste;
 And with a sygh she sayde hym atte laste,
 "Now, uncle myn, I ny! yow nought displese,
 Nor axen moore that may do yow disese."

¹ Five such. ² To interpret. ³ Pledge ⁴ Prouder.

So after this, with many wordes gladde,
 And frendely tales, and with mery cheere, 149
 Of this and that thay playde, and gonnen wade
 In many an unkouth,¹ glad, and deepe matere,
 As frendes doon, when they ben met yfeere;²
 Tyl she gan axen hym how Ector ferde,
 That was the tounes wal, and Grekes yerde.³

"Ful wele, I thonke it God," quod Pandarus,
 "Save in his arme he hath a litil wounde;
 And eke his fresshe brother Troylus,
 The wyse, worthy Ector the secounde,
 In whom that al vertu liste habounde,
 As alle trouthe and alle gentillesse, 160
 Wysdom, honour, fredom, and worthynesse."

"In goode fayth, eem,"⁴ quod she, "that
 liketh me,
 They faren wel, God save hem bothe two!
 For treweliche I holde it grete deyntee,⁵
 A kynges sone in armes wel to do,
 And ben of goode condiciouns therto;
 For greete power and moral vertu heere
 Is selde yseyn in o person yfeere."²

"In goode faith, that is sooth," quod Pan-
 darus;
 'But by my trouthe, the kyng hath sones
 tweye, — 170
 That is to mene Ector and Troylus, —
 That certeynly, thogh that I sholde deye,
 They ben as voyde of vyces, dar I seye,

¹ Unknown. ² In company. ³ Rod, scourge. ⁴ Uncle. ⁵ Rarity

As any men that lyven under the sonne ;
 Hire myght is wyde yknowe, and what they
 konne.

“Of Ector needeth it no more to telle ;
 In al this world ther nys a bettre knyght
 Than he, that is of worthinesse the welle,¹
 And he wel moore vertu hath than myght ;
 This knoweth many a wys and worthy knyght ;
 The same prys ² of Troylus I seye, — 181
 God help me so, I knowe nat swiche tweye.”

“By God,” quod she, “of Ector that is soth,
 Of Troylus the same thing trowe I ;
 For, dredelees, men tellen that he dooth
 In armys day by day so worthily,
 And bereth him here at hoom so gentilly
 To every wyght, that alle prys hath he
 Of hem that me were levest preysed be.” 189

“Ye seye right sooth ywys,” quod Pandarus ;
 “For yesterday, who-so hadde with hym ben,
 He myghte han wondred upon Troylus,
 For nevere yet so thikke a swarm of been ³
 Ne fleigh, as Grekes fro hym gonne fleen ;
 And thorgh the felde in every wyghtes ere,
 Ther nas no cry but, ‘Troylus is here !’

“Now here, now ther, he hunted hem so faste,
 Ther nas but Grekes bloode ; and Troylus,
 Now he hem hurte, and hem alle down he
 caste, —

Ay wher he wente it was arayed thus : 200

¹ Source ² Praise ³ Bees.

"Shal I not wyten¹ what ye mene of this?"

"No, this thyng asketh leyser,"² tho quod he,

"And eke me wolde much greve ywys,³

If I it tolde and ye it toke amys :

Yet were it bet my tonge for to stille, 230

Than seye a sooth that were ageins youre
wille.

"For, nece myn, by the goddesse Mynerve,
And Juppiter, that maketh the thonder rynge,
And by the blysfyl Venus that I serve,

Ye ben the womman in this world lyvyng, —

Withouten paramours,⁴ — to my wittynge,

That I best love and lothest am to greve,

And that ye weten wele youre-selve, I leve."⁵

"Ywys,⁶ myn uncle," quod she, "*graunt*
mercy,"⁷

Youre frendship have I founden evere yit ; 240

I am to no man holden trewely

So muche as yowe, and have so litil quyt :

And with the grace of God, enforth⁸ my wyt,

As in my gylt, I shal you nevere offende,

And if I have or⁹ this, I wol amende.

"But for the love of God I yowe beseche,

As ye ben he that I love moste and triste,

Lat be to me youre fremde¹⁰ maner speche,

And say to me, youre nece, what yowe liste."

And with that word hire uncle anon hire

kiste, 250

¹ Know. ² Leisure. ³ Truly. ⁴ Lovers excepted, *i. e.*, in the way of friendship. ⁵ Believe. ⁶ Certainly. Many thanks ⁷ As far as. ⁸ Ere. ⁹ Strange.

And sayde, "Gladly, leve nece dere!
Tak it for goode that I shal saye yow here."

With that she gan hire eyghen doun to caste
And Pandarus to koghe gan a lyte,¹
And sayde, "Nece, alway lo! to the laste,
How-so it be, that som men hem delite
With subtile art hire tales for to endyte,
Yet for alle that in hire entencioun,
Hire tale is al for som conclusioun.

"And sithen thende is every tales strengthe,
And this matere is so byhovely,² 261
What shold I peynte or drawen it on lengthe
To yow, that ben my frende so faythfully?"
And with that word he gan right inwardly
Byholden hire, and loken on hire face,
And sayde, "On swiche a myroure goode
grace!"

Than thoght he thus: "If I my tale endyte
Aught hard, or make a processe³ any while,
She shal no savour han therin but lyte,
And trowe I wolde hire in my wil bygile; 270
For tendere wittes wenen al be wyle⁴
Ther as they kan nat pleyedly understonde;
Forthy hire witte to serven wol I fonde,"⁵ —

And loked on hire in a bysny wise,
And she was ware that he byhelde hire so,
And sayde, "Lord! so faste ye mayse!⁶
Sey⁷ ye me nevere or now, what sey ye no?"

¹ Coughed a little. ² Fit, promising. ³ Argument. ⁴ Think all
to be wile. ⁵ Try. ⁶ Scrutinize me. ⁷ Saw.

"Yis, yis," quod he, "and bet wol er I go :
But by my trouthe I thoughte now if ye
Be fortunate, for now men shal it se ; 280

" For to every wight som goodly aventure
Somtyme is shape, if he it kan receyven :
And if that he wol take of it no cure
When that it cometh, but wilfully it weyven,¹
Loo, neyther cas ² nor fortune hym deceyven,
But right his verray slouthe and wrechednesse :
And swich a wight is for to blame, I gesse.

" Goode aventure, O bele nece, have ye
Ful lightly ³ founden, and ye kanne it take ;
And, for the love of God, and eke of me, 290
Catche it anon, leste aventure it slake :
What shold I longer processe of it make ?
Gif me youre hond, for in this world is noon,
If that yow liste, a wyght so wel bigone.⁴

" And sith I speke of goode entencioun,
As I to yow have tolde wele her biforne,
And love as wel youre honour and renoun,
As creature in al this world yborne :
By alle the othes that I have yow sworne,
If ye be wroth therfor or wene I lye, 300
Ne shal I nevere sen yow eft with eighe.

" Beth nought agast, ne quaketh not ; wherto ?
Ne chaungeth noght for fere so youre hewe,
For hardely ⁵ the werste of this is do ;
And thogh my taie as now be to yow newe,
Yet trist alwey ye shal me fynde trewe ;

¹ Put away. ² Chance. ³ Easily. ⁴ In so good a way. ⁵ Truly.

And were it thyng that me thoughte unsit-
tynge,¹

To yow I wolde no swich tales brynge."

"Now, my goode em, for Goddes love I
preye,"

Quod she, "com of, and tel me what it is ; 310

For both I am agast what ye wile seye,

And eke me longeth it to wite ywis ;

For whether it be wel or be amys,

Sey on, lat me not in this fere dwelle."

"So wol I don, — now herkeneth I shal telle :

"Now, nece myn, the kynges dere sone,

The goode, wyse, worthy, fresshe, and fre,

Which alwey for to don wel is his wone,²

The noble Troylus so loveth the,

'That, but ye helpe, it wol his bane be. 320

Lo, here is alle ! what shold I more seye ?

Doth what yow list, to mak hym lyve or deye ;

"But if ye lat hym deyen I wol sterve, —

Have here my trouth, — and, nece, I nyl nought
lyen,

Al shold I with this knyf my throte kerve."

With that the teres briste oute of his eighen,

And seyde, "If that ye don us bothe deyen

Thus gilteles, than have ye fisshed fayre ;³

What mende ye thogh that we bothe apayre ?⁴

"Allas ! he whiche that is my lord so deere,

That trewe man, that noble gentyl knyght, 331

That noght desyreth but youre freendely cheere

1 Unbecoming. 2 Wont. 3 Done well. 4 Receive injury.

I se him deyen ther he gothe upright ;
 And hasteth hym with alle his fulle myght
 For to ben slayn, if his fortune assente ;
 Allas, that God yow swich a beaute sente !

“ If it so be that ye so cruel be,
 That of his deth yow liste nat to reche,¹
 That is so trewe and worthy as ye se,
 Namore than of a japare or a wreche, 340
 If ye be swiche, youre beaute may not streche,
 To make amend of so cruel a dede :
 Avysemente² is good bifore the nede.

“ Wo worth³ the faire gemme vertulees !
 Wo worth that herb also that doth no boote !⁴
 Wo worth that beau^{te} that is routheles !⁵
 Wo worth that wyght that tret⁶ ech under foote !
 And ye, that be of beaute crop⁷ and roote,
 If therwithal in yow ther be no routhe, 349
 Thanne is it harm ye lyven, by my trouthe !

“ And also thynke wel that it is no gaude,⁸
 For me were levere that thou, and I, and he
 Were hanged, than I sholde ben his baude,
 As heigh as men mighte on us alle ysee :
 I am thin em, the shame were to me,
 As wel as the, if that I sholde assente,
 Thorgh myn abet, that he thin honour shente.⁹

“ Now understonde, for I noght requere
 To bynde yow to hym thorgh no beheste,
 But oonly that ye mak hym bettere chere 360

¹ Reck. ² Consideration. ³ Woe be to. ⁴ Cure. ⁵ Pitiless
 Treadeth. ⁷ Top. ⁸ Trick. Ruined.

Than ye han don or this, and moore feste,
 So that his lyve be saved at the leste :
 This al and som, and pleynty oure entente ;
 God help me so, I nevere other mente.

“ Loo, this requeste is noght but skyl¹ ywis,
 Ne doute of reson, *pardee*, is ther noon ;
 I set the werste, lest that ye dreden thys,
 Men wolde wondren sen hym come or gone :
 Ther-ageyns answer I thus anone,
 That every wyght, but he be fool of kynde,² 370
 Wol deme it love of frendshippe in his mynde.

“ What? who wol demen, thogh he se a man
 To temple gon, that he thymages etteth?
 Thynke eke, how wel and wysely that he kan
 Governe hymself, that he nothyng forgeteth
 That where he comth, he prys³ and thanke
 hym geteth ;

And eke therto he shal come here so selde,
 What fors⁴ were it thogh al the toun bihelde ?

“ Swich love of frendes regneth al this toun :
 And wrie⁵ yow in that mantel everemoo ; 380
 And God so wys be my savacioun,
 As I have seyde, youre best is to do soo :
 But, goode nece, alway to stynte his wo,
 So lat youre daunger sucred ben alyte,⁶
 That of his deth ye be nought for to wyte.”⁷

Cryseyde, which that herd hym in this wyse,
 Thoughte, “ I shal feelen what he mene ywys :

¹ Reason. ² A natural fool. ³ Praise. ⁴ Matter. ⁵ Cover
 Haughtiness be a little mollified (sugared). ⁷ Blame.

Now, em," quod she, "what wolden ye devyse?

What is youre rede ¹ I sholde don of this?"

"That is wel seyde," quod he, "certeyn best is,

390

That ye hym love ageyn for his lovyng,

As love for love is skylful guerdonyng.²

"Thynk eke how elde ³ wasteth every houre
In eche of yow a partye of Beaute,

And therfor, er that age the devoure,

Go love, for olde ther wol no wyght of the :

Lat this proverb a lore unto yow be,

'To lat I war,' quod Beaute, 'when it paste,

And elde daunteth daunger ⁴ at the laste.'

"The kynges foole is wonte to cryen loude,
When that hym thynketh a womman berth hire

heighe,

401

'So longe mote ye lyve, and alle proude,

Tyl crowes feete be growe under youre eigh!

And sende yow thanne a myrour in to pry

In whiche ye maye se youre face a morwe!'

Nece, I bydde hym wysshe yow no more
sorwe!" ⁵

With this he stynte, and caste adown the
hede,

And she began to breste awepe ⁶ anone.

And seyde, "Allas, for wo! why nere I dede?

For of this world the feith is al agone: 410

¹ Advice. ² Reasonable rewarding. ³ Age. ⁴ Pride. ⁵ I beg
aim wish you no greater sorrow. ⁶ Burst into tears.

Allas ! what sholden straunge folke me don,
 When he that for my beste freend I wende,
 Ret¹ me to love, and sholde it me defende ?²

“Allas, I wold han trusted douteles,
 That if that I, thorgh my disaventure,
 Hadde loved other hym or Achilles,
 Ector, or any manner creature,
 Ye nold han had no mercy ne mesure
 On me, but alwey had me in repreve :
 This false world, alas ! who may it leve !³ 420

“What ! is this al the ‘joye’ and alle the
 ‘feeste’ ?

Is this youre rede ? is this my ‘blysfyl cas’ ?
 Is this the verray mede of youre behestes ?
 Is alle this peynted proces seyde, alas,
 Ryght for this fyn ? O lady myn, Pallas !⁴
 Thow in this dredeful cas for me purveye,
 For so astoned am I, that I deye.”

With that she gan ful sorwfully to syke.⁵
 “A ! may it be no bet ? ” quod Pandarus ;
 By God, I shal namore com here this wyke !
 And, God toforne ! that am mystrusted thus :
 I se ful wele that ye sette lyte of us, 432
 Dr of oure deth : alas, I woful wreche !
 Myght he yit lyve, — of me is nought to reche !

“O cruel god, O dispiteouse Marte !
 O Furies thre of helle ! on yow I crye,
 So lat me nevere out of this house departe,

¹ Adviseth (redeth). ² Forbid. ³ Believe. ⁴ Pallas Athena, inventor of most kinds of woman's work. ⁵ Sigh.

If I ment harm or any vilanye :
 But sith I se my lord moote nedes deye,
 And I with hym, here I me shryve and seye,
 That wikkedly ye don ¹ us bothe to deye. 441

"But sith it liketh ² yow that I be dede,
 By Neptunus, that God is of the see !
 Fro this forth shal I nevere eten brede,
 Til I myn owen hertes blode may see ;
 For certein I wol deye as sone as he."
 And up he sterte, and on his way he raughte,³
 Til she agayn hym by the lappe ⁴ ykaughte.

Cryseyde, whiche that wel neigh starf for
 pure fere,⁵

So eke as she was the ferfullest wight 450
 That myghte be, and herd eke with hire ere,
 And saugh the sorwful earnest of the knyght,
 And in his preyers saughe eke noon unright,
 And for the harme that myght eke fallen more,
 She gan to rew and dredde her wonder sore.

And thoghte thus : "Unhappes fallen thykke
 Alday for love, and in swiche manere cas,
 As men ben cruel in hemself and wykke,
 And if this man here sle him-self, allas !

In my presaunce it wol be no solas. 460
 What men wolde of it deme I kan nat seye ;
 It nedeth me ful sleighely for to pleye."

And with a sorwful syk, she seyde threye,⁶
 "A, Lord ! what me is tyd a sory chaunce !
 For myn estate lith now in a jupartye,⁷

¹ Cause. ² Pleaseth. ³ Turned. ⁴ Lappet. ⁵ Died for very fear
 Thrice. ⁷ *Jeu parti*, evenly balanced play.

And eke myn emes lyf is in balaunce :
 But natheles, with Goddes governaunce
 I shal so done, myn honour shal I kepe,
 And ek his lyf : " and stynte for to wepe.

" Of harmes two, the lesse is for to cheese,
 Yet have I levere maken hym goode chere 471
 In honour, than myn emes lyf to lese, —
 Ye seyn, ye nothyng elles me requere."

" No, wys,"¹ quod he " myn owen nece dere."
 " Now wel," quod she, " and I wol do my peyne,
 I shal myn herte ageynist my liste² constreyne

" But that I nyl nat holden hym in honde,
 Ne love a man, ne kan I nought, ne may,
 Ageyns my wyl, but elles wol I fonde,³ —
 Myn honour saufe, — plese hym fro day to day
 Therto nold I nat ones han seyde nay, 481
 But that I drede, as in my fantasye :
 But cesse cause, ay cesseth maladye.

" But here I make a protestacioun,
 That in this processe, if ye depper go,
 That certainly, for no savacioun
 Of yow, though that ye sterven bothe two,
 Though al the world on o day be my fo,
 Ne shal I nevere on hym han other routhe !"
 " I graunt wele," quod Pandarus, " by my
 trouthe. 490

" But may I truste wele therto," quod he,
 " That of this thyng that ye han high⁴ me
 here

¹ Ywis, truly. ² Pleasure. ³ Try. ⁴ Promised.

Ye wol it holden trewiȝ unto me ? ”

“ Ye, douteles,” quod she, “ myn uncle deere.”

“ Ne that I shal han cause in this matere,”

Quod he, “ to pleyne, or efter yow to preche ? ”

“ Why no, pardee ! wnat nedeth more speche ? ”

Tho¹ fillen they in oothere tales gladde,
 Iyl at the laste, “ O goode em,” quod she tho,
 “ For love of God whiche that us bothe made,
 Tel me how firste ye wisten of his woo : 501
 Woote noon of it but ye ? ” He seyde, “ No.”
 “ Kan he wel speke of love,” quod she, “ I prey ?
 Tel me, for I the bet shal me purveye.”

Tho Pandarus a litil gan to smyle,
 And seyde : “ By my trouthe I wol yow telle, —
 This oother day, noght gon ful longe while,
 In-with the paleys gardyn by a welle,²
 Gan he and I wel half a day to dwelle,
 Ryght for to speken of an ordynaunce, 510
 How we the Grekes myghten disavaunce.

“ Soone after that bigonne we to lepe,
 And casten with oure dartes to and fro,
 Til at the laste, he seyde, he wolde slepe,
 And on the gres³ adoun he layde him tho ;
 And I ther-after gan romen to and fro,
 Til that I herde, as that I welke⁴ allone,
 How he bygan ful wofully to grone.

“ Tho gan I stalke hym softely byhynde,
 And sykerly, the sothe for to seyne, 520
 As I kan clepe ageyn now to my mynde,

¹ Then. ² Fountain. ³ Grass ⁴ Walked

Right thus to Love he gan hym for to pleyne ;
 He seyde, ‘ Lord, have routhe upon my peyne,
 Al have I ben rebel in myn entente,
 Now, *meâ culpâ*,¹ lord, I me repente.

“ ‘ O God, that at thy disposicioun
 Ledest the fyn, by juste purveiaunce,
 Of every wight, my lowe confessioun
 Accepte in gree,² and send me swich penaunce
 As liketh the ; but from *desesperaunce*,³ 530
 That may my goost departe⁴ away fro the,
 Thow be my shelde, for thi benignite ;

“ ‘ For certes, lord, so sore hath she me
 wounded
 That stode in blake, with lokynge of hire
 eighen,
 That to myn hertis botme it is younded,
 Thorgh wiche I woote I moote nedes dyen ;
 This is the werste, I dar me nat bewryen,⁵
 And wel the hootter ben the gledis⁶ rede
 That men hem wren⁷ with asshen pale and
 dede.’

“ With that he smote his hed adoun anone
 And gan to motre, I note⁸ what trewely, 541
 And I with that gan away stille gone
 And lete therof, as nothyng wiste hadde I,
 And come agein anon and stode hym by,
 And seyde, ‘ Awake, ye slepen alle to longe !
 It semeth nat that love doth⁹ yow to longe,

¹ My fault, words familiar in the general confession at church in the fourteenth century. ² With favor (Fr. *en gré*). ³ Despair
⁴ Part. ⁵ Discover. ⁶ Coals. ⁷ Cover. ⁸ Know not. ⁹ Causeth.

“That slepen so that no man may yow wake ;
Who sey evere er this so dul a man ?’

Ye, frend,’ quod he, ‘do ye youre heddes ake
For love, and lat me lyven as I kan.’ 550

But thogh that he for wo was pale and wan,
Yet made he tho as fresshe a contaunce,
As thogh he sholde have led the newe daunce.

“This passede forth, tyl now this other day
It felle that I come romynge al allone
Into his chaumber, and fonde how that he lay
Upon his bedde ; but man so sore grone
Ne herde I nevere, and what that was his mone
Ne wyste I noght, for as I was comynge
Al sodeynly he lefte his compleynyng. 560

“Of which I toke somewhat suspeccioun
And ner² I come, and fond he wepte soore ;
And, God so wys be my savacioun !
As nevere of thyng had I no rowthe more ;
For neyther with engyne,³ ne with lore,
•Unnethes⁴ myght I hym fro the deth kepe,
That yet fele I myn herte for him wepe.

“And, God woot, nevere sith that I was
borne

Was I so bysy no man for to preche,
Ne nevere was to wyght so depe sworne, 570
Or⁵ he me told who myghte ben his leche ;
But now to yow rehersen al his speche,
Or al his woful wordes for to sowne,
Ne byd me noght, but ye wol se me swowne.

¹ Saw. ² Nearer. ³ Craft, wit. ⁴ Scarcely. ⁵ Ere.

“ But for to save his lyf, and elles nought,
 And to non harme of yow, thus am I dryven ;
 And for the love of God that us hath wroght
 Swyche chere hym doth, that he and I may
 lyven ;

Now have I plat to yow myn herte shryven,
 And sith ye woote that myn entent is clene,
 Take hede therof, for I non evel mene ; 58

“ And right good thryft, I pray to God, have
 ye,

That han swich oon ycaught withouten net,
 And be ye wys, as ye ben fayr to se,
 Wel in the ringe than is the ruby set ;
 Ther were nevere two so wele ymet
 When ye ben his al hole, as he is youre :
 Ther myghty God graunt us to se that houre ! —

“ Nay, therof speke I noght ! ” “ Ha, a ! ”
 quod she,

“ As helpe me God, ye shenden every dele ! ”

“ O ! mercy, dere nece, ” anon quod he, 59

“ What-so I spake I mente nought but wele,
 By Mars the god, that helmed is of stele !
 Now beth noght wroth, my blode, my nece
 dere. ”

“ Now wel, ” quod she, “ forgiven be it here. ”

With this he toke his leve, and home he
 wente ;

A, Lord ! so he was glad, and wel bygon !
 Cryseyde aros, no longer she ne stente,
 But streght into hire closet wente anone,

And set hire doun, as stille as any stone, 600
And every word gon up and down to wynde,¹
That he had seyde, as it come hire to mynde,

And wax somdele astoned in hire thought,
Right for the newe cas ; but when that she
Was ful avysed, tho fonde she right noght
Of peril, why she aught aferde be :

For man may love of possibilite
A womman so, his herte may to-breste,
And she nought love ageyn, but if hire leste

But as she sat allon and thoughte thus, 610
Ascry aroos at scarmich² alle withoute,
And men cried in the strete, " Se Troylus
Hath right now put to flyght the Grekes route ! "
With that gan al hire meyne³ for to shoute :
" A ! go we se, caste up the gates wide,
For thorgh this strete he moote to paleys
ryde ! "

For oother way is to the gates noon,
Of Dardanus,⁴ there open is the cheyne :
With that come he, and alle his folke anon,
An esy pace rydyng, in routes tweyne, 620
Right as his happy day was, sothe to seyne :
For whiche men seyne may noght distourbed be
That shal bytyden of necessite.

This Troylus sate on his bay stede
Alle armed save his hed ful richely,
And woned was his hors, and gan to blede,

¹ Turn. ² Skirmish. ³ Retirée. ⁴ The Scean gate is the only one mentioned by the ancients. Dardanus founded Troy.

On wiche he roode a pase ful softlyt :
 But swiche a knyghtely sighte trewely
 As was on hym, was nought withouten faile,
 To loke on Mars, that god is of batayle ! 630

So like a man of armes and a knyght,
 He was to sen, fulfild of heigh prowesse ;
 For bothe he hadde a body and a myght
 To don that thyng, as wele as hardynesse ;
 And ek to sen hym in his gere hym dresse,
 So fresshe, so yong, so weldy ¹ semed he,
 It was an heven upon hym for to se.

His helme to-hewen was in twenty places,
 That by a tyssew ² henge his bak byhynde,
 His shelde to-dasshed was with swerdes and
 maces, 640

In which men myghte many an arwe fynde,
 That thyrled ³ hadde horn and nerf and rynde ; ⁴
 And ay the peple criede, " Here comyth oure
 joye,

And, nexte his brother, holdere up of Troye ! "

For which he wex a litel rede for shame
 Whan he the peple upon him herde crien,
 That to byholde it was a noble game,
 How sobreliche he caste doun his eighen :
 Cryseyd anon gan al his chere aspyen,
 And leete so softe it in hire herte synken 650
 That to hire-self she seyde, " Who gaf me
 drynken ? " ⁵

¹ Dexterous (able to wield). ² Ribbon. ³ Pierced. ⁴ It was made of horn, sinews, and skins. ⁵ That is, of a love potion

For of hire-owene thought she wex al rede,
Remembrynge hire right thus, “Lo! this is he,
Which that myn uncle swerth he moot be dede,
But I on hym have mercy and pite :”

And with that thought, for pure ashamed she
Gan in hire hed to pulle, and that as faste,
While he and alle the peple forby paste ;

And gan to caste, and rollen up and doun
Within hire thought his excellent prowesse,
And his estat, and also his renoun, 661
His wit, his shape, and eke his gentilnesse ;
But moost hire favour was for ¹ his destresse
Was al for hire, and thought it as a routhe
To sle swich oon, if that he mente trouthe.

Now myghte som envyous jangle thus :
“This was a sodeyn love, how myghte it be
That she so lightly ² lovede Troylus,
Right for the firste sight ?” Ye, parde ?
Now who seith so, mote he nevere ythe ! ³ 670
For every thyng a gynnyng hath it nede
Er alle be wrought, withouten any drede.

For I sey noght that she so sodeynly
Gaf hym hire love, but that she gan enclyne
To like hym firste, and I have told yow why ;
And efter that, his manhod and his pyne ⁴
Made love withinne hire herte for to myne ; ⁵
For which by proces and by goode servyse
He gat hire love, and in no sodeyn wyse :

And also blisful Venus, wel arayed, 680

¹ Because. ² Easily. ³ Thrive. ⁴ Pain. Penetrate.

Sat in hire seventhe hous of hevene **tho**,
 Disposed wel, and with aspectes payed¹
 To helpen sely Troylus of his wo :
 And soth to seyn, she nas nat al a fo
 To Troylus, in his nativitee ;
 God woot that wele the sonner spedde **he**.²

Now lat us stynte of Troylus a throwe,
 That rideth forth, and lat us torne faste
 Unto Cryseyde, that henge hire hed ful lowe,
 Ther as she sat allone, and gan to caste 696
 Wheron she wold apoynte hire at the laste,
 If it so were hire em ne wolde cesse
 For Troylus upon hire for to presse.

And, Lord ! so she gan in hire thought argue
 In this matere, of which I have yow tolde,
 And what to done best were, and what teshue,
 That plytede³ she ful ofte in many folde :
 Now was hire herte warm, now was it colde.
 And what she thoughte, somewhat shal I wryte,
 As to myn auctour listeth for tendite. 700

She thoughte wel, that Troylus persone
 She knewe by sight and eke his gentilnesse :
 And thus she seyde : “ Al were it not to done
 To graunt hym love, yet for his worthinesse,
 It were honor, with pleye and with gladnesse.
 In honeste, with swich a lord to dele,
 For myn estat, and also for his hele.”⁴

“ Eke wel wot I my kynges sonne is he,

¹ Propitious. ² For the astrological allusions see vol i., Introduction.
³ Folded (revolved). ⁴ Help, salvation.

And sith he hath to se me swich delite,
 If I wold outrelliche his sighte flee, 710
 Paraunter he myght have me in dispite,
 Thorgh which I myghte stond in worse plite :
 Now were I wise, me hate to purchase
 Withouten nede, ther I may stonde in grace ?

“ In every thyng, I wot, ther lith mesure ;
 For though a man forbede dronkenness,
 He noght forbet that every creature
 Be drenkelees for alway, as I gesse :
 Eke, sith I wote for me is his destresse,
 I ne aught nat for that thyng hym dispise, 720
 Sith it is so he meneth in goode wyse ;

“ And ek I knowe, of longe tyme agon,
 His thewes ¹ goode, and that he is nat nyce,²
 Navauntour,³ seith men, certein is he noon,
 To wys is he to don so grete a vyce :
 Ne als I nyl hym nevere so cherice,
 That he may mak avaunte by juste cause ;
 He shal me nevere bynde in swich a clause.

“ Now set ⁴ a caas, — the hardeste is ywys,
 Men myghten demen that he loveth me : 730
 What dishonour were it unto me this ?
 May Ich hym lett of that ? Why, nay, pardee !
 I knowe also, and alway here and see,
 Men loven wommen al this toun aboute ;
 Be they the wers ? Why, nay, withouten doute !

“ I think eke how he able is to have

¹ Moral traits. ² Foolish, weak. ³ Ne avawator, nor boaster
⁴ Suppose.

Of al this noble toun the thriftyeste,
To ben his love, so she hire honour save :
For oute and oute he is the worthyeste,
Save oonly Ector, which that is the beste ; 740
And yit his lyf alle lith now in my cure,
But swich is love, and eke myn aventure !

“ Ne me to love a wonder is it nought ;
For wele wote I my-self, so God me spede ! —
Al wold I that noon man wyste of this
thoughte, —

I am oon the fayreste, out of drede,
And goodelyeste, who-so taketh hede,
And so men seyn in al the toun of Troye ;
What wonder is though he of me have joye !

“ I am myn owne womman, wele at ese, 750
I thanke it God, as efter myn estate,
Right yong, and stonde unteyd in lusty leese,
Withouten jalousie, or swich debat :
Shal noon housebonde seyn to me ‘ chek mat !’
For eyther they ben ful of jalousie,
Or maysterful, or loven novelrye.

“ What shal I don ? to what fyn lyve I thus ?
Shal I nat love in cas if that me liste ?
What ? *pardieux* ! I am noght religieuse ;
And thogh that I myn herte sette at reste 760
Upon this knyght that is the worthyeste,
And kepe alwey my honour, and my name,
By al right it ne may do me no shame.”

But right as when the sonne shyneth brighte
In March that chaungeth ofte tyme his face,

And that a cloude is put with wynde to flyght,
Which oversprat the sonne, as for a space,
A cloudy thought gan thorgh hire soule pace,
That overspradde hire brighte thoughtes alle,
So that for feere almoost she gan to falle. 770

That thought was this: “Allas! syn I am free,
Shold I now love, and putte in jupartye
My sikernesse, and thrallen libertye?
Allas! how dorste I thenken that folye?
May I nought wel in other folk aspye
Hire dredful¹ joye, hire constreynte, and hire
peyne?

Ther loveth noon, that she nath² why to pleyne.

“For love is yet the mooste stormy lyf,
Right of hymself, that evere was bygonne;
For evere som mystruste, or nyce stryfe, 780
Ther is in love, som cloude is over that sonne:
Therto we wreched wommen nothyng konne,
When us is wo, but sitte, and wepe, and thynke;
Oure wreche³ is this, oure owen wo to drynke.

“Also thise wikkede tonges ben so preste⁴
To speke us harme; eke men ben so untrewes,
That right anon, as cessed is hire leste,
So ceseth love, and forth to love a newe:
But harme ydon is don, who-so it rewe;
For thogh this men for love hem firste to-rende,
Ful sharpe bygynnyng breketh oft at ende. 791

“How ofte tyme hath it yknowen be
The treson, that to wommen hath ben do?

¹ Full of dread. ² Hath not (ne hath). ³ Misery. ⁴ Ready.

To what fyn is swich love I kan nat se,
 Or wher bicometh it when it is ago ;
 There is no wyght that woot, I trowe so,
 Wher it bicometh ; lo, no wight on it sporneth ;
 That arst was nothyng, into nought it torneth.

“ How bisy, if I love, eke most I be
 To plesen hem that jangle of love, and demen,
 And coye ² hem, that they seye noon harme of
 me ;

801

For though ther be no cause, yet hem semen
 Alle be for harme that folk hire frendes que-
 men ; ³

And who may stoppen every wykked tonge,
 Or soun of belles while that they been ronge ? ”

And efter that hire thought gan for to clere,
 And seyde, “ He which that nothyng under-
 taketh

Nothyng nacheveth, be hym leve or deere ; ”
 And with another thought hire herte quaketh ;
 Than slepeth hope, and after, drede awaketh,
 Now hoot, now cold ; but thus bytwixen tweye
 Tho rist hire up, and went hire for to pleye. 812

Adoun the steyre anon right tho she wente
 Into the gardyn with hire neces thre,
 And up and doun ther made many a wente, ⁴
 Flexippe and she, Tharbe, and Antigone,
 To pleyen, that it joye was for to se ;
 And other of hire wommen, a grete route,
 Hire folwede in the gardyn alle aboute.

¹ Kicketh. ² Soothe. ³ Please. ⁴ Turn.

This yerde was large, and rayled alle thal-
eyes,¹ 820

And shadwed wel with blosmy bowes grene,
And benched newe, and sonded² alle the wayes,
In whiche she walketh arm in arme betwene;
Til at the laste Antigone the shene³
Gan on a Trojan songe⁴ to syngen clere,
That it an hevene was hire vois to here.

Antigone's Song.

She seyde, "O Love, to whom I have and shal
Ben humble suget,⁵ trewe in myn entente,
As I best kan to you, lord, geve Ich al
For everemo myn hertes lust to rente : 830
For nevere yet thy grace no wight sente
So blisful cause as me, my lyf to lede
In alle joye and seurte, oute of drede.

"The blisful god hath me so wele beset
In love ywis, that alle that bereth lyf
Ymagynen ne koude how to ben bet;
For, lord, withouten jalousye or stryf
I love oon which that moost is ententif
To serven wel, unwéry or unfeyned,
'That evere was, and leest withe harme de
streyned. 840

"As he that is the wel⁶ of worthynesse,
Of trowthe ground, myrour of goodelyhede,

¹ The paths. ² Sanded. ³ Bright ⁴ This song is not in Boocaccio. ⁵ Subject ⁶ Source

Of wit Apollo, stoon of sikernesse,¹
 Of vertu roote, of lust fynder and hede,
 Thorgh which is alle sorwe fro me dede :
 Ywis I love hym best, so doth he me ;
 Now goode thryft have he, wher-so that he be !

“ Whom shold I thanken but yow, god of
 Love,

Of alle this blisse in which to bathe I gynne ?
 And thanked be ye, lord, for that I love ! 850
 This is the righte lyf that I am inne,
 To flemen² alle manere vyce and synne :
 This doth³ me, so to vertu for tentende
 That day by day I in my wyl amende.

“ And who-so seith that for to love is vice,
 Or thraldom, though he fele in it destresse,
 He other is envyous, or right nyce,⁴
 Or is unmyghty for his shrewednesse⁵
 To loven, for swich maner folk I gesse
 Defamen Love, as nothyng of hym knowe,
 They speke mych but they bente nevere his
 bowe. 861

“ What is the sonne wors of kynde⁶ righte,
 I'hogh that a man, for feblenesse of his eighen,
 May not endure on it to se for bryghte ?
 Or love the wors, thogh wreches on it crien ?
 No wele is worth that may no sorwe dryen ;⁷
 And forthy, who that hath an hede of verre⁸
 Fro caste of stones war hym in the werre.

¹ Security. ² Banish. ³ Causeth. ⁴ Ignorant. ⁵ Cursedness.
 Nature ⁷ Suffer. ⁸ Glass. Cf. v. 469, and *Canterbury Tales*,
 1654.

“But I with al myn herte and alle my myght,
As I have seyde, wol love unto my laste 870
My dere herte and alle myn owen knyght,
In whiche myn herte growen is so faste
And his in me, that it shal evere laste :
Alle¹ dredde I firste to love hym to bigynne,
Now wote I wel ther is no peril inne.”

And of hire song right with that worde she
stente,
And therwithalle, “Now, nece,” quod Cryseyde,
“Who made this songe now with so goode en-
tente?”

Antigone answerde anon and seyde,
“Madam, ywis, the goodelyeste mayde 880
Of grete estate in al the toun of Troye,
And led hire lyf in moost honour and joye.”

“Forsothe so it semeth by hire songe,”
Quod tho Cryseyde, and gan therwith to syke,²
And seyde, “Lord ! is ther swiche blisse amonge
Thise lovers, as they konnen faire endite ?”
“Ye, ywis,” quod fresshe Antigone the white ,
“For al the folk that han or ben on lyve
Ne konne wel the blisse of love descryve.

“But wene ye that every wreche woot 890
The parfit blisse of love ? Why, nay, ywys !
They wenen al be love if con be hote ;
Do way, do way ! they wote nothyng of this !
Men moste axe at seintes if it is

¹ Although. ² Sigh.

Aught fayre in heven ; why ? for they kan telle .
And axen fendes, is it foule in helle."

Cryseyde unto that purpos noght answerde,
But seyde, "Ywis it wol be nyght as faste !"
But every word, which that she of hire herde,
She gan to prenten in hire herte faste, 900
And ay gan love hire lesse for tagaste
Than it dyde erst, and synken in hire herte,
That she wax somewhat able to converte.

The dayes honour, and the hevenes eye,
The nyghtes foo, — al this clepe I the sonne, --
Gan westren faste, and dounward for to wrye,¹
As he that hadde his dayes cours yronne ;
And white thynges wexen dymme and donne²
For lakke of lyght, and sterres for tapere,³
That she and al hire folk in wente yfere.⁴ 910

So when it liked hire to gon to reste,
And voyded weren they that voyden oughte,
She seyde that to slepen wel hire leste :
Hire wommen soon untyl hire bed hire
broughte :

When al was hust, than lay she stil and
thoughte

Of al this thyng the manere and the wyse
Reherce it nedeth nought, for ye ben wyse.

A nyghtyngale, upon a cedre grene
Under the chaumber wal ther as she lay,
Ful loude songe agein the moone shene, 920
Paraunter, in his briddes wyse, a lay

¹ Turn. ² Dun. ³ To appear. ⁴ Together.

Of love, that made hire herte fresshe and gay;
 That herkned she so longe in goode entente,
 Tyl at the laste the dede slepe hire hente.¹

And as she slepe, anoon right tho hire mette,²
 How that an egle, fethered white as bone,
 Under hire breste his longe clawes sette,
 And out hire herte he rent, and that anon,
 And dide his hert into hire breste to gon;
 Of whiche she noght agroos³ ne no thyng
 smerte, 930

And forth he fleigh, with herte left for herte.

Now lat hire slepe, and we oure tales holde
 Of Troylus, that is to palays ryden,
 Fro the scarmich of the which I yow tolde,
 And in his chaumber sit, and hath abyden,
 Til two or thre of his messages geden⁴
 For Pandarus, and soghten hym ful faste,
 Til they hym fonde, and broughte hym at the
 laste.

This Pandarus come lepyng in atones, 939
 And seyde thus, "Who hath ben wel ybette
 To day with swerdes, and with sleyng stones,
 But Troylus, that hath kaughte hym an hete?"
 And gan to jape, and seyde, "Lorde, ye swete!
 But ris and lat us soupe, and go to reste;"
 And he answerde hym, "Do we as the leste."

With alle the haste goodely that they myghte,
 They spede them fro the soper unto bedde,
 And every wyght oute at the dore hym dyghte,⁵

¹ Took. ² Dreamed. ³ Was terrified. ⁴ Messengers went
 Disposed.

And wher hym leste, upon his way he spedde,
 But Troylus, that thought his herte bledde
 For wo, til that he herde som tydyng, — 95
 He seyde, “ Frende, shal I now wepe or syng ? ”

Quod Pandarus, “ Lye stil ! and lat me slepe
 And don thin hode, thy nedes spedde ¹ be,
 And chese if thou wylte syng or daunce or
 lepe ;

At shorte wordes thou shalt trowe me ;
 Sir, my nece wol doen wel by the,
 And love the beste, by God and by my trouthe,
 But lakke of pursute mak it in thy slouthe ;

“ For thus ferforth I have thy worke bigonne,
 Fro day to day, til this day by the morwe, ² 96
 Hire love of frendship have I to the wonne,
 And also hath she layd hire faith to borwe ; ³
 Algate a foot is hameled ⁴ of thy sorwe,” —
 What shold I lenger sermon of it holde ?
 As ye han herd bifore, al he hym tolde.

But right as floures, thorgh the cold of nyghte
 Yclosed, stowpen on her stalkes lowe,
 Redressen hem agein the sonne brighte,
 And spreden on hire kynde cours by rowe ;
 Right so gan tho his eyghen up to throwe 97
 This Troylus, and seyde, “ O Venus dere,
 Thy might, thy grace, yheried ⁵ be it here ! ”

And to Pandarus he held up both his hondes
 And seyde, “ Lord ! al thin be that I have ;

¹ Successful. ² Morning. ³ Pledge. ⁴ Already a foot is lamed
 literally, hamstrung). ⁵ Praised.

For I am hole, — al brosten ben my bondes ;
 A thousand Trojans who-so that me gave,
 Ech efter other, — God so wys me save ! —
 Ne myghte me so gladen ; lo, myn herte,
 It spredeth so for joie, it wol to-sterete. 980

“But, lord ! how shal I don ? how shal I
 lyven ?

Whan shal I next my deere herte see ?
 How shal this longe tyme away be dryven,
 Til that thou be agein at hire fro me ?
 Thow mayst answer, ‘ Abid, abid ! ’ but he
 That hangeth by the nekke, soth to seyne,
 In grete disese ¹ abideth for the peyne.”

“Al esily now, for the love of Marte !”

Quod Pandarus, “for every thyng hath tyme ;
 So longe abid til that the nyght departe, 990
 For also siker ² as thou lyst here by me,
 And, God toforne, I wol be there at pryme,
 And for thy werk somewhat as I shal seye,
 Or on som other wight this charge leye.

“For, *parde*, God wote, I have evere yit
 Ben redy the to serve, and to this nyght
 Have I nought feyned, but emforth ³ my wit
 Don al thy luste, and shal with alle my myght ;
 Do now as I shal seyne, and fare arighte ;
 And if thow nylt, wyte ⁴ al thy-self thy care,
 On me is noght alonge thin yvel fare. 1001

“I woote wel that thow wyser art than I
 A thousand fold ; but if I were as thow,

¹ Discomfort. ² Sure.y. ³ Even with. ⁴ Blame.

God helpe me so, as I wolde outrelly
 Right of myn owne honde write hire now
 A lettre, in which I wolde hire tellen how
 I ferd amys, and hire biseche of routhe :
 Now helpe thyself, and leve it nought for
 slouthe.

“ And I my-self wol therwith to hire gone,
 And when thou woste that I am with hire there,
 Worth¹ thow upon a courser right anoon, —
 Ye hardily !² right in thy beste gere, — 1012
 And ride forth by the place, as noght it were,³
 And thow shalt fynde us, if I may, sittynge
 At som wyndow into the strete lokynge.

“ And if the leste, than maistow us salue,
 And upon me make thou thy contenaunce,
 But, by thy lif, bewar and faste eschue
 To tarien ought ; God schilde us fro mis-
 chaunce ! 1019

Ride forth thy way, and hold thy governaunce,
 And we shal speke of the somewhat I trowe,
 When thow art gon, to don thyn eris glowe.

“ Touchynge thy lettre, thow ert wyse ynough,
 I wot thow nylt it digneliche endite,
 As make it with thyse argumentez tough,
 Ne scryvenyss⁴ or craftily thou it write ;
 Byblotte it with thy teris eke a lite,
 And if thou write a goodely worde al softe,
 Though it be goode, reherce it nought to ofte

¹ Get. ² Certainly. ³ With nonchalance. ⁴ Like a scrivener.
 These directions are imitated from Ovid. Cf. *Ars Amatoria*,
 453, and *Heroides*, ep. iii.

“For though the beste harpour upon lyve
Wold upon the beste sowned joly harpe 1031
That evere was, with alle his fyngeres fyve
Touche ay o strenge or ay o warbul harpe,
Were his nayles poyntes nevere so scharpe,
It sholde maken every wyght to dulle,
To here his glee, and of his strokes fulle.

“Ne jompre ¹ eke no discordant thyng yfere,
As thus, to usen termes of fisyk;
In loves termes hold of thy matere
The forme alway, and do that it be like; 1040
For if a peyntour wolde peynte a pike
With asses feet, and hedde it as an ape,
It cordeth naught, so nere ² it but a jape.”

This conseil lyked wele to Troylus,
But as a dredful ³ love he seyde this:
“Allas, my dere brother Pandarus,
I am ashamed for to wryte, ywis,
Leste of myn innocence I seyde amys,
Or that she nolde it for despit receyve;
Than were I ded, ther myght it nothyng
weyve.” ⁴ 1050

To that Pandare answerde, “If the leste,
Do that I seye, and lat me therwith gon;
For by that lord that formed Est and Weste,
I hope of hit to brynge answer anoon
Right of hire honde, and if that thow nylyt noon
Lat be, and sory mote he ben his lyve,
Ageyn thy lust that helpeth the to thrive.”

¹ Jumble. ² Were it not. ³ Fearful. ⁴ Hinder.

Quod Troylus, "*Depardieux*, Ich assente ;
 Sith that the lest, I wil arise and wryte ;
 And blisful god pray Ich, with goode entente,
 The vyage and the letre I shal endite, 1061
 So spede it, and thou, Minerva the whyte,
 Gif thou me wit my letre to devyse ;"
 And sette hym doun, and wrot right in this
 wyse.

First he gan hire his "righte lady" calle,
 His "hertes lif," his "lust," his "sorwes
 leche,"¹

His "blisse," and ek these other termes alle,
 That in swich cas these lovers alle seche ;
 And in ful humble wyse, as in his speche,
 He gan hym recomaunde unto hire grace ;
 To telle alle how, it axeth muchel space. 1071

And efter this ful lowely he hire preyde
 To be noght wroth, thogh he of his folye
 So hardy was to hire to write, and seyde
 That love it made, or elles moost he dye,
 And pytously gan mercy for to crye.
 And efter that he seyde, and leigh² ful lowde,
 "Hym-self was litel worth, and lesse he koude ;"³

And that she shold han his konnyng ex-
 cused,
 That litel was, and ek he dradde hire so, 1080
 And his unworthynesse he ay acused.
 And after that than gan he telle his wo,
 But that was endeles, withouten "hoo ;"

¹ Physician. ² Lied. ³ Knew ⁴ Ho! (stop!)

And seyde, he wolde in trouth alway hym holde :
And radde¹ it over, and gan the letre folde.

And with hise salte teris gan he bathe
The ruby in his signet, and it sette
Upon the wex deliverliche² and rathe ;³
Therwith a thousand tymes, er he lette,
He kiste tho the letre that he shette, 1090
And seyde, " Letre, a blisful destyne
The shapen is, my lady shal the se ! "

This Pandare tooke the letre, and that by-
tyme

A-morwe, and to his neces paleys sterte,
And faste he swore that it was passed prime,
And gan to joye, and seyde, " Ywis myn herte,
So fresshe it is, alle-though it soore smerte,
I may noght slepe nevere a Mayes morwe,⁴
I have a joly wo, a lusty sorwe."

Cryseyde, when that she hire uncle herde,
With dredeful herte, and desirous to here 1101
The cause of his comynge, thus answerde :

" Now by youre fey, myn uncle," quod she,
" dere,

What maner wyndes gideth you now here ?
Tel us youre ' joly wo,' and youre penaunce, —
How ferforth be ye put in loves daunce ? "

" By God," quod he, " I hop⁵ alway by-
hynde ! "

And she to laugh, it thoughte hire herte breste :
Quod Pandarus, " Looke alwey that ye fynde

¹ Read. ² Nimble. ³ Quicker. ⁴ Morning. ⁵ Dance.

Game in myn hood ! ¹ but herkeneth if you leste
 Ther is right now come into toune a gest, 1111
 A Greke asprie, and telleth newe thynges,
 For which I come to telle you tydynges.

“ Into the gardyn go we, and ye shal here
 Al pryvely of this a longe sermon : ” ²
 With that they wenten, arm in arm yfere, ³
 Into the gardyn from the chaumbre doun.
 And when that he so fer was, that the soun
 Of that he spake no man heren myghte,
 He seyde hire thus, and out the letre plyghte.

“ Lo, he that is al holly youre free, 1121
 Hym recomaundeth lowly to youre grace,
 And sent you this letre here by me ;
 Avyseth yow on it, when ye han space,
 And of som goodely answeere you purchase ; ⁴
 Or, helpe me God, so pleyndly for to seyne,
 He may not lange lyven for his peyne.”

Ful dredfully ⁵ tho gan she stonde styлле,
 And toke it noght, but al hire humble chere
 Gan for to chaunge, and seyde, “ Scrit ne bille,
 For love of God, that toucheth swiche matere,
 Ne brynge me noon ! and also, uncle dere,
 To myn estat have more rewarde, ⁷ I preye, 1133
 Than to hise lust, what shold I more seye ?

“ And looketh now if this be resonable, —
 And letteth ⁸ noght, for favour ne for slouthe,
 To seyne a sothe, — now were it covenable ⁹

¹ Cf. v. 469. ² Discourse. ³ Together. ⁴ Provide. ⁵ Timidly
 Writing nor letter. ⁷ Regard. ⁸ Be not hindered. ⁹ Fitting.

To myn estat, by God, and by youre trouthe,
To taken it, or to han of hym routhe,
In harmynge of my-self or in repreve? 1140
Ber it ageyn, for hym that ye on leve."¹

This Pandarus gan on hire for to stare,
And seyde, "Now is this the grettest wonder
That ever I sey! lat be this nyce fare!
'To dethe mote I be smyten with thunder,
If for the cite which that stondeth yonder,
Walde I a letre unto yow brynge or take,
To harm of yow; what list yow thus it make?"²

"But thus ye faren wel neigh al and some,
That he that moste desireth yow to serve, 1150
Of hym ye reche leest wher he bycome,
And whether that he lyve, or elles sterve:
But for al that that evere I may deserve,
Refuse it noghte," quod he, and hynte³ hire
faste,

And in hire bosom doun the letre he thraste.

And seyde hire, "Now caste it away anoon
That folke may seyne, and gauren⁴ on us
tweye."

Quod she, "I kan abide til they be gone;"
And gan to smyle, and seyde hym, "Em, I preye
Swiche answer as yow list youre-self purveye:
For trewely I nyl no letre wryte." 1161

'No? than wol I," quod he, "so ye endite."

Therwith she lough, and seyde, "Go we
dyne."

¹ Believe on. ² Why do you make so strange of it? ³ Seized Gaze.

And he gan at hym-self to jopen faste,
 And seyde, "Nece, I have so grete a pyne
 For love, that everych other day I faste,"
 And gan his beste japes forth to caste ;
 And made hire so to laughe at his folye,
 That she for laughtere wende for¹ to deye.

And whan that she was comen into the
 halle, 1170
 "Now, em," quod she, "we wol go dyne anon ;"
 And gan some of hire wommen to hire calle,
 And streght into hire chaumber gan she gon ;
 But of hire besynesse this was oon,
 Amonges other thynges, out of drede,
 Ful pryvely this letre for to rede.

Avysed word by word in every lyne,
 And fonde no lakke, she thoughte he koude
 goode ;
 And up it putte, and went hire in to dyne ;
 And Pandarus, that in a stodye stode, 1180
 Er he was war, she toke hym by the hooode,
 And seyde, "Ye were caughte er that ye
 wiste !"

"I vouchesauf," quod he, "do what yow liste."
 Tho wesshen they, and sette hem doun and
 ete ;

And after noon ful sleighly Pandarus
 Gan drawe hym to the wyndow next the strete.
 And seyde, "Nece, who hath arrayed thus
 The yonder house, that stant aforgeynes us ?"

¹ Thought that she should.

‘Which house?’ quod she, and gan for to
byholde, 1189

And knewe it wele, and whos it was hym tolde.

And fillen forthe in speche of thynges smale,
And seten in the wyndowe bothe tweye :

When Pandarus saugh tyme unto his tale,

And saugh wel that hire folk weren al aweye :

“Now, nece myne,” quod he, “tel on, I seye ;

How liketh yow the letre that ye woote ?

Kan he thereon ? for by my trouthe I noot.”

Therwith al rosy hewed tho wex she,

And gan to homme, and seide, “So, I trowe !”

“Aqyte hym wel, for Goddes love !” quod he,

“My-self to medes¹ wol the letre sowe,”² 1201

And helde his hondes up, and fil on knowe ;³

“Now, gode nece, be it never so lite,

Gif me the labour it to sow and plyte.”

“Ye, for I kan so wryten,” quod she tho,

“And eke I noot what I sholde to hym seye.”

“Nay, nece,” quod Pandare, “sey not so ;

Yet at the leest, thonketh hym, I preye,

Of his goode wil, and doth⁴ hym not to deye ;

Now for the love of me, my nece dere, 1210

Refuseth nat at this tyme my preyere.”

“*Depardieux !*” quod she, “God lene⁵ al be
wele !

God helpe me so, this is the firste lettre

That evere I wrote, ye, al or any dele ;”

¹ For my reward ² Letters were sewed, besides being folded
(plyted) and sealed. ³ Knee. ⁴ Cause. ⁵ Grant.

And into a closet, for tavyse hire¹ better,
 She wente allone, and gan her herte unfettere
 Out of desdaynous prison but a lite ;
 And sette hire down, and gan a letre write.

Of which to telle in shorte is myn entent
 Theffect, as fer as I kan understonde : 122c
 She thanked hym of al that he wel mente
 Towardes hire, but holden hym in honde
 She nolde nocht ne make hire-selfen bonde
 In love ; but as his sister, hym to plese,
 She wolde fayne to don his herte an ese.

She shette it, and to Pandare gan gone
 Ther as he satte and loked into the strete,
 And down she sette hire by hym on a stone
 Of jasper, on a quysshon gold ybette,²
 And seyde, "As wysly help me God the grete"
 I nevere dide a thyng with more peyne, 1231
 Than writyn this, to whiche ye me constreyne."

And toke it hym : he thanked hire and seyde,
 "God woote of thyng ful often loth bygonne
 Cometh ende goode, and, nece myn Cryseyde,
 That ye to hym of harde now ben ywonne,
 Ought he be gladde, by God and yonder sonne"
 For why? Men seith impressyounes lighte
 Ful lightely³ ben ay redy to the flyghte. 1239

"But ye han played the tiraunt neigh to longe
 And harde was youre herte for to grave ;⁴
 Now stynte, that ye no lenger on it longe,

¹ To consider. ² A cushion adorned with gold. ³ Easily. ⁴ Im-
 pressa.

Al wolde ye the fourme of daunger¹ save,
But hasteth yow to don² hym joye to have;
For trusteth wel, to longe yaon hardnesse
Causeth despite ful often for destresse.”

And right as they declamede this matere,
Lo! Troylus, right at the stretes ende,
Com ridynge, with his tenne some yfeere,⁸
Al softly, and thiderward gan bende 1250
Ther as they sete, as was his wey to wende
To payleyse-ward, and Pandarus hym aspiede,
And seyde, “Nece, yse who comth here ryde!

“O fle noght in, — he seth⁴ us, I suppose, —
Lest he may thynken that ye hym eschewe.”
“Nay, nay,” quod she, and wex as rede as rose;
With that he gan hire humbly to salwe
With dredeful chere, and oft his hewes mewen;⁶
And up his look debonairly he caste,
And bekked on⁶ Pandare, and forth he paste.

God woot if he sat on his hors aright, 1261
Or goodely was byseyn⁷ that ilke day!
God woot wher⁸ he was like a manly knyghte!
What shold I dretche,⁹ or telle of his array?
Cryseyde, which that al thise thynges sey,
To telle in short, hire liked alle yfeere,
His persone, his array, his look, his chere,
His goodely manere, and his gentillesse,
So wel that nevere sith that she was borne,
Ne hadde she swiche routhe of his distresse;

¹ Coyness. ² Cause. ³ With some ten of his attendants. ⁴ Seeth Change (Fr. *muer*, Lat. *mutare*). Beckored to. ⁷ Well dressed Whether. ⁹ Vex.

And how so she hath harde ben here biforne,
 To God hope I she hathe now caught a thorne,
 She shal nought pul it out this nexte wyke;
 God sende mo swich thornes on to pyke! 1274

Pandare, which that stood hire faste by,
 Felt thiren¹ hoot, and he bigan to smyte,
 And seyde, "Nece, I preye yow hertely,
 Telle me that I shal axen yow a lyte:
 A womman that were of his deth to wyte²
 Withoute his gylte, but for hire lakked routhe,
 Were it wele don?" Quod she, "Nay, by my
 trouthe!" 1281

"God help me so," quod he, "ye say me soth.
 Ye felen wele youre-self that I noght lye;
 Loo, yonde he rideth!" Quod she, "Ye, so he
 doth."

"Wele," quod Pandare, "as I have tolde yow
 thrye,³

Lat be youre nyce shame and youre folye,
 And spek with hym in esynge of his herte,
 Lat nycete nat do yow bathe⁴ smerte."

But theron was to heven⁵ and to doone;
 Considered al thyng, it may nat be, 1290
 And why? for shame; and it were eke to soone
 To graunten hym so grete a liberte:
 For pleynly hire entente, as seyde she,
 Was for to love hym unwyste, if she myghte,
 And guerdon⁶ hym with nothyng but with
 sighte.

¹ The iron. ² Blame. ³ Thrice. ⁴ Both. ⁵ Labor. ⁶ Reward.

But Pandarus thoght it shal noght be so ;
Yf that I may, this nyce opinyoun
Shal noght be holden fully yeres two.
What shold I make of this a longe sermoun ?
He most assente on that conclusioun, 1300
As for the tyme ; and when that it was eve,
And alle was wele, he roos and toke his leve.

And on his wey ful fast homwarde he spedde,
And right for joye he felt his herte daunce,
And Troylus he fond allone abedde,
That lay, as done this lovers, in a traunce,
Bytwyxen hope and derke desesperaunce ;¹
But Pandarus, right at hys incomynge,
He song as who seith, "Lo, somewhat I brynge !"

And seyde, "Who is in his bed so soone 1310
Ybured thus ?" "It am I, frende," quod he.
"Who? Troylus? nay, help me so the moone !"
Quod Pandarus, "thou shalt arise and se
A charme that was sent right now to the,
The whiche kan helen the of thyn accesse,²
If thou do forthwith al thy besynesse."

"Ye, thorgh the myght of God !" quod
Troylus ;

And Pandarus gan hym the letre take,
And seyde, "*Pardee !* God hath holpen us ;
Have here a light, and se thise lettres blake !"
But ofte gan the herte glade and quake 1321
Ot Troylus, whil that he gan it rede,
So as the wordes gave hym hope or drede.

¹ Despair. ² Cure thee of thy fever

But finally he toke al for the beste
 That she hym wroot, for somewhat he bihelde
 On which hym thought he myght his herte reste
 Al ¹ covered she the wordes under shelde ;
 Thus to the more worthy part he helde,
 That, what for hope, and Pandarus biheste,
 His grete wo for-gede ² he at the leeste. 1330

But as we may al day oure-selven se,
 Thorgh more wode or cole the more fire ;
 Right so encrees of hope, of what it be,
 Therwith ful ofte encreesseth eke desire ;
 Or as an ook comth of a litel spire,
 So thorgh this letre, which that she hym sente,
 Encressen gan desir of which he brente.

Wherfor I seye alwey, that day and nyghte
 This Troylus gan to desire moore
 Than he dide first thorgh hope, and dide his
 myghte 1340

To pressen on, as by Pandarus lore,
 And wryten to hire of his sorwes soore
 Fro day to day ; he leet it noght refreyde, ³
 That by Pandare he wroot somewhat or seyde ;

And dide also his other observaunce,
 That tille ⁴ a lover longeth in this cas ;
 And efter that thise dees ⁵ torned on chaunce,
 So was he other glad, or seyde "allas !"
 And helde after his gestes ay his pas ;
 And eftir ⁶ swich answeere as he hadde, 1350
 So were his dayes sory other gladde.

¹ Although. ² Forgot. ³ Grow cool. ⁴ To. ⁵ After that these
 's., as his) dice turned. ⁶ After.

But to Pandare alwey was his recours,
 And pytously gan ay til hym to pleyne,
 And hym bisoughte of rede,¹ and som socours ;
 And Pandarus, that sey his woode payne,²
 Wex wel nygh dede for routhe, soth to seyne,
 And bisily with al his herte caste,
 Som of his wo to slen,³ and that as faste ;

And seyde, " Lorde, and frende, and brother
 dere,

God woot that thy disese doth me wo ; 1360
 But wiltow stynten al this woful chere,
 And, by my trouthe, er it be dayes two,
 And God toforn, yet shal I shape it so,
 That thow shalt come unto a certeyn place,
 Ther as thow maist thiself hire preye of grace.

" And certeynly, I noot⁴ if thou it woste,
 But tho that ben expert in love it seye,
 It is oon of the thynges forthreth moste,
 A man to have a leyser for to preye,
 And syker place his wo for to bywreie ; 1370
 For in good hert it moot som routhe impresse
 To here and se the giltelees in destresse.

" Paraunter thynkestow : ' Though it be so,
 That Kynde⁵ wolde don hire to bygynne
 To han a maner routhe upon my wo ; '
 Seith Daunger .⁶ ' Nay, thow shalt me nevere
 wyne ;

So reuleth hire hire hertes goost withinne,

¹ Counsel. ² Saw his angry pain. ³ Slay. ⁴ Know not. ⁵ Nat
 ure. ⁶ Coyness

Quod he ; and to Deiphebus wente he tho,
Which hadde his lord and grete frend ben ay ;
Save Troylus no man he lovede so.

To tel in shorte, withouten wordes mo,
Quod Pandarus, " I preye you that ye be
Frende to a cause which that toucheth me."

" Yis, *parde !*" quod Deiphebus, " wel thou
woost

In al that ever I may, and God tofore,
Al nere it but for man I love moost, 1410
My brother Troylus ; but sey wherfore
It is ; for sith that day that I was bore,
I nas ne nevere mo to ben, I thynke,
Ageins a thyng that myghte the forthynke."¹

Pandare gan hym thanke, and to hym seyde,
" Lo ! Sire, I have a lady in this town
That is my nece, and called is Cryseyde,
Which som men wolden don oppression,
And wrongfully han hire possession ;
Wherfor I of your lordship you beseche 1420
To ben oure frend, withouten more speche."

Deiphebus hym answerde : " O, is nat this
That thou of spekest to me thus straungely,
Cryseyde my frende ?" He seyde, " Yis."
" Than nedeth," quod Deiphebus, " hardely,
Namore to speke ; for trusteth wel that I
Wol be hire champyon with spore and yerde,²
I raughte noght though alle hire foos it herde.

" But telle me thou, that woost alle *this matere*,

¹ Vex. ² Spur and rod.

How myght I beste awaylen now ; lat se."
 Quod Pandarus, " If ye, my lord so dere, 1431
 Wolden as now do this honour to me,
 To preyen hire to morwe, lo, that she
 Com unto you, hire pleyntes to devyse,
 Hire adversaries wold of it agryse.¹

" And gif I more dorst preye you as now,
 And chargen you to han so grete travaile,
 To han some of youre brethren here with you,
 That myghte to hire cause bet avayle,
 Than woot I wele she myghte nevere fayle 1440
 For to ben holpen, what at youre instaunce,
 What with hire other frendes generaunce."

Deiphebus, which that comen was of kynde
 To alle honour and bounte² to consente,
 Answerde, " It shal be don ; and I kan fynde
 Yet grettere helpe to this in myn entente :
 What wiltow seyn, if I for Eleyne³ sente
 'To speke of this ? I trow it be the beste,
 For she may leden Paris as hire lyste. 1449

" Of Ector, whiche that is my lorde, my brother,
 It nedeth nought to preye hym frende to be ;
 For I have herde hym, o tyme and eke other,
 Speke of Cryseyde swich honour, that he
 May seye no bet, swich hap to hym hath she ;
 It nedeth nought hise helps for to crave,
 He shal be swiche, right as we wol hym have.

" Spek thow thy-self also to Troylus
 On my bihalve, and preye hym with us dyne."

¹ Be afraid ² Goodness. ³ Helen.

'Sir, al this shal be don," quod Pandarus :
And took his leve, and nevere gan to fyne,¹ 1460
But to his neces house, as streght as lyne,
He com, and fond hire fro the mete arise,
And sette hym down, and spak right in this wyse .

He seyde, "O verray God ! so have I ronne !
Lo, nece myn ! se ye noght how I swete ?²
I not whether ye the more thank me konne :
Be ye noght ware how false Polyphete
Is now aboute eftsones for to plete,³
And brynge on yow advocacies⁴ newe ?" 1469
"I ? no !" quod she, and chaunged al hire hewe.

"What ? is he more aboute me to dreche,⁵
And don me wronge ? what shal I don, allas ?
Yet of hymself nothyng ne wolde I reche,⁶
Nere it for Antenor and Eneas,
That ben his frendes in swich manere cas ;
But for the love of God, myn uncle dere,
No fors of that, lat hym han alle yfere.

"Withouten that I have ynogh for us."
"Nay," quod Pandare, "it shal no thyng be so ;
For I have ben right now at Deiphebus, 1480
And Ector, and myne other lordes mo,
And shortly maked eche of hem his foo,
That, by my thryft, he shal it nevere wynne,
For oght he kan, when so that he bygynne."

And as they casten what was best to done,
Deiphebus of his oven curtesye

¹ E.L.L. ² Sweat. ³ Immediately to plead ⁴ Lawsuits. ⁵ Vex
Care.

Com hire to preye, in his propere persone,
 To holde hym on the morwe compaignie
 At dyner, which she wolde noght denye,
 But goodely gan to his preyer obeye. 1490
 He thanked hire, and wente upon his weye.

When this was don, this Pandare up anon,
 To telle in shorte, and forth he gan to wende,
 To Troylus, as stille as any stoone,
 And al this thyng he told hym, word and ende,¹
 And how that he Deiphebus gan to blende,²
 And seyde hym, "Now is tyme, if that thou
 konne,

To bere the wele to morwe, and alle is wonne.

"Now speke, now preye, now pitously com-
 pleyne, 1499

Lat³ noght for nyce shame or drede or slouthe;
 Sometyme a man mot telle his owne payne;
 Bileve it, and she shal han on the routhe;
 Thou shalt be saved by thy feithe, in trouthe;
 But wel woot I, thou art now in a drede,
 And what it is, I leye I kanne arede.⁴

"Thow thynkest now, 'How sholde I don al
 this,

þor by my chere mosten⁵ folk aspye,
 That for hire love is that I fare amys,
 Yet hadde I levere unwyste for sorwe die:'
 Now thynke noght so, for thou dost grete folye
 For I righte now have founden a manere 1511
 Of sleight, for to coveren al thy chere.

¹ Probably "ord and ende," beginning and end. Cf. v. 1583 *Canterbury Tales*, l. 8333; and *Legende of Goode Women*, l. 645 *Blind*. ³ Stop. ⁴ I wager I can interpret. ⁵ Must.

“Thou shalt gon over nyght, and that as blyve,
To Deiphebus house, as the to pleye,
Thy malady away the bet to dryve,
For-why thou semest sike, soth for to seye ;
So after that, don in thy bedde the leye,
And seye thou maiste no longer up endure,
And lye right there, and byd ¹ thin aventure.

“ Sey that thy fevere is wonte the for to take
The same tyme, and lasten tyl on morwe ;
And lat se now how wel thow kanst it make ;
For, *parde*, sike is he that is in sorwe. 1523
Go now, farewel ! and Venus here to borwe ! ²
I hope, and thou this purpos holde ferme,
Thy grace she shal fully ther conferme.”

Quod Troylus, “ Ywis thou nedeles
Conseylest me, that sikliche I me feyne,
For I am sike in earnest, douteles,
So that wel nygh I sterve ³ for the peyne.”
Quod Pandarus, “ Thou shalt the bettere
pleyne, 1531

And hast the lasse nede to conterfete,
For hym men demen hoote that men seen swete.

“ Lo, holde the at thy tryste ⁴ cloos, and I
Shal wel the deere unto thy bowe dryve.”
Therwith he took hise leve al softly,
And Troylus to paleys wente blyve,
So glad ne was he nevere in alle his lyve ;
And to Pandarus reede gan al assente, 1539
And to Deiphebus hous at nyght he wente.

¹ Abide. ² Venus being her pledge. Die. ⁴ Trysting-place.

What nedeth you to tellen alle the chere
 That Deiphebus unto his brother made ?
 Or his accesse,¹ or his siklych manere,
 How men gan hym with clothes for to lade,
 Than he was leyde,² and how men wolde hym
 glade ;

But al for noghte, he helde forth ay the wyse
 That ye han herde Pandare er this devyse.

But certeyn is, er Troylus hym leyde,
 Deiphebus had hym preyed over nyght
 To ben a frend and helpynge to Cryseyde ;
 God woot that he it graunted anon right 1551
 To ben hire fulle frende with al his myght :
 But swich a nede was to prey hym thenne,
 As for to bidde a woode³ man for to renne.

The morwen com, and nyghen gan the tyme
 Of mee-le-tide that the faire queene Eleyne
 Shapte hire to ben, an houre efter the prime,
 With Deiphebus, to whom she nolde feyne ;⁴
 But as his suster, homly, soth to seyne, 1559
 She come to dyner in hire pleyne entente ;
 But God and Pandare wiste what al this mente.

Com eke Cryseyde, al innocent of this,
 Antigone hire suster, Tharbe also ;
 But flee we now prolixite beste is,
 For love of God, and lat us faste go
 Right to theeffect, withouten tales mo,
 Why al this folk assemblede in this place,
 And lat us of hire saluynge pace.⁵

¹ Fever. ² Laid abed. ³ Mad ⁴ Would not flatter ⁵ Pass over
 their salutations.

“BESTE KOUDE I BEN HIS LECHE!” 485

Grete honour dide hem Deiphebus certein,
And fedde hem wel, with al that myghte like ;
But everemo, “Allas !” was his refreyne, 157
“ My goode brother Troylus that sike
Lyth yet,” and therwithalle he gan to sike,
And efter that he peyned hym to glade
Hem as he myght, and chere goode he made.

Compleyned eke Eleyne of his sikenesse
So feithfully, that pite was to here,
And every wight gan wexen for thaccesse ¹
A leche ² anon, and seyde, “ In this manere
Men curen folk ;” “ This charme I wol yow
leere ;” 1580
But ther sat oon, al liste hire noght to teche,
That thoughte, “ Beste koude I yet ben his
leche !”

After compleynt hym gonnen they to preyse,
As folk don yet when som wight hath bygonne
To preyse a man, and up with prys him rayse
A thousande fold yet heighere than the sonne :
“ He is, he kan, that fewe lordes konne !”
And Pandarus, of that they wolde afferme,
He noght forgat hire preysynge to conferme.

Herde al this thyng Cryseyde wel ynogh,
And every word gan for to notifie, ³ 1591
For whiche with sobre chere hire herte lough,
For who is that ne wold hire glorifie
To mowen ⁴ swich a knyght don lyve or dye ?

¹ The fever. ² Physician. Observe, make note of. ⁴ To be able.

But al passe I, lest ye to longe dwelle,
For o fyn is alle that ever I telle.

The tyme com fro dyner for to rise
And, as hem oghte, arisen everychon,
And gonne a while of this and that devyse ;
But Pandarus brak al this speche anon, 1600
And seyde to Deiphebus, " Wol ye gone,
If youre wille be, as I yow preyde,
To speke here of the nedes of Cryseyde ? "

Eleyne, whiche that by the honde hire helde,
Took first the tale, and sayde, " Go we blyve."
And goodely on Cryseyde she byhelde,
And seyde, " Joves late hym nevere thryve
That doth you harm, and brynge hym sone of
lyve,¹

And geve me sorwe but he shal it rewe,
If that I may, and alle folk be trewe." 1610

" Tel thow thy neces cas," quod Deiphebus
To Pandarus, " for thow kanst best it telle."
" My lordes and my ladys, it stant thus ;
What shold I longer," quod he, " do you
dwelle ? " ²

He rong hem oute a proces ³ like a belle
Upon hire fo, that highte Poliphete,
So heynous, that men myghte on it spete.⁴

Answerde of this ech werse of hem thar
other,
And Poliphete they gonnen thus to waryen : ⁵

¹ Take him quickly from life.
Spi.

² Cause you to wait.

³ Story

⁴ Curse.

"Anhonged be swich oon, were he my brother!
er!" 162c

"And so he shal, for it ne may noghte varyen."
What sholde I longer in this tale taryen?
Pleynlich al atones they hire highten¹

To ben hire help in al that evere they mygh'ten.

Spake thanne Eleyne, and seyde, "Pandarus,
Woot oghte my lorde,² my brother, this matere?
I mene Ector; or woot it Troylus?"

He seyde, "Ye!" but, "Wole ye now me here?

Me thynketh this, sith Troylus is here,

It were good, if that ye wolde assente, 163c

She told hire-self hym al this er she wente.

"For he wol have the more hire grief at herte,
Bycause, lo, that she a lady is;

And by youre leve, I wol but in right sterte,

And do you wyte,³ and that anon ywis,

If that he slepe, or wol oght here of this:"

And yn he lepte, and seyde hym in his ere,

"God have thy soule, ybrought have I thy
beere!"

To smylen of this tho gon Troylus,

And Pandarus, withouten rekenynge, 164c

Out wente anon to Eleyne and Deiphebus,

And seyde hem, "So ther be no tarynge

Ne more prees, he wol wele that ye brynge

Cryseyde, my lady. that now is here,

And as he may enduren, he wol here.

"But wel ye wote, the chaumber is but lyte,

¹ Promise. ² Knows my lord aught? ³ Make you know

And fewe folk may lightly mak it warm ;
 Now loketh ye ; for I wol have no wyte ¹
 To brynge in prees that myghten don hym harm,
 Or hym disesen, ² for my bettre arm : ³ 1650
 Wher ⁴ it be bet she bide til eftsones,
 Now loketh ye that knowen what to doon is.

“ I sey for me, best is as I kan knowe,
 That no wyght in ne wente, but ye tweye,
 But it were I ; for I kan in a throwe ⁵
 Reherce hire cas, unlike that she kan seye :
 And efter this she may hym ones preye
 To ben good lord in short, and take hire leve ;
 This may noght muchel of his ese hym reve.

“ And eke for she is straunge, he wol forbere
 His ese, which that hym dare noght for yow ;
 Eke other thyng, that toucheth nought to
 here, 1662

He wol me telle, I woot it wele right now,
 That secrete is, and for the tounes prow : ” ⁶
 And they that nothyng knew of this entente,
 Withoute more, ⁷ to Troylus in they wente.

Eleyne, in al hire goodly softe wyse,
 Gan hym salve, and wommanly to pleye,
 And seyde, “ Ywis, ye most alwayes arise !
 Now, fayre brother, beth al hool I preye ! ” 1670
 And gan hire arm right over his shulder leye,
 And hym with al hire wit to reconforte,
 As she best koude, she gan hym to disporte.

¹ Blame. ² Incommodious. ³ To save my right arm. ⁴ Whether
 Trice. ⁵ Profit. ⁷ Without more ado.

So after this, quod she, "We you biseke, —
 My deere brother Deiphebus and I, —
 For love of God, and so doth Pandare eke,
 To ben goode lord and frende, right hertely,
 Unto Cryseyde, which that certainly
 Receyveth wrong, as woot wel here Pandare,
 That kan hire cas wel bet than I declare." 1680

This Pandarus gan now his tonge affile,
 And al hire cas reherce, and that anon.
 When it was seyde, soone after in a while,
 Quod Troylus, "As soon as I may gone,
 I wol right fayn with al my myght ben one, —
 Have God my troth, — hire cause to sustene."
 "Goode thrift have ye!" quod Eleyne the
 quene.

Quod Pandarus, "And it youre wille be,
 That she may take hire leve or that she go?
 Or elles God forbede it," tho quod he, 1690
 "If that she voucheth sauf for to do so."
 And with that worde, quod Troylus, "Ye two,
 Deiphebus, and my suster leef¹ and dere,
 To you have I to speke of a matere,

"To ben avysed by youre rede² the bettere :"
 And fond, as hap was, at his beddes hed
 The copie of a tretis, and a lettre
 That Ector hadde hym sent to axen rede
 If swiche a man was worthy to ben dede,
 Noot I noght³ who ; but in a grysely⁴ wyse
 He preyed hem anon on it avyse. 1701

¹ Loved. ² Advice. ³ Know I not. ⁴ Horrible.

Deiphebus gan this letre for to unfolde
 In ernest gret, so dide Eleyne the quene,
 And romynge outward, fast it gonne biholde,
 Downward a steyre, into an herber¹ grene :
 This ilke thyng they redder hem bitwene,
 And largely the mountaunce of an houre
 They gonne on it to reden and to poure.

Now lat hem rede, and torne we anon
 To Pandarus, that gan ful faste pryde 1710
 That al was wel ; and out he gan to gon
 Into the grete chaumber, and that in hye,²
 And seyde, “ God save al this cumpaignye !
 Com, nece myn, my lady quene Eleyne,
 Abideth you, and eke my lordes tweyne.

“ Ris, take with you youre nece Antigone,
 Or whom you lest, or no fors hardily ;³
 The lesse prees the bet, com forth with me,
 And loke that ye thonken humbly
 Hem alle thre ; and when ye may goodely
 Youre tyme se, taketh of hem youre leve, 1721
 Lest we to longe his restes hym byreve.”

Al innocent of Pandarus entente,
 Quod tho Cryseyde, “ Go we, uncle dere ; ”
 And arm in arm, inward with hym she wente,
 Avysed wel hire wordes and hire chere ;
 And Pandarus, in ernestful manere,
 Seyde, “ Alle folk, for Goddes love I preye,
 Stynteth right here, and softely yow pleye.

“ Avyseth you what folk ben her withinne,

¹ Garden. ² Haste. ³ No matter, indeed.

And in what plite oon is, God hym amende!"
And inwarde thus ful softely bygynne: 1731

' Nece, I conjure, and heighly you defende,¹ —
On his half which that soule us al sende,
And in the vertu of corones tweyne, —
Sle noght this man that hath for you this peyne.

"Fye on the devel! thynke which oone he is,
And in what plit he lith; com of anon,
Thynk 'alle swich taried tyd but lost it ys;'
That wol ye bothe seyne, when ye ben oon:
Secoundely, ther yet devyneth noon 1741

Upon you two; com of now, if ye konne,
Whil folk is blent,² lo, al the tyme is wonne!

"In titerynge,³ and pursuyte, and delayes,
The folk devyne at waggyng of a stre,⁴
And though ye wol have aftyr merye dayes,
Than dar ye noght, and why? 'For she, and
she,

Spak swich a word;' 'thus loked he, and he;'
Lest tyme I lost, I dar noght with yow dele;
Come of therfor, and bryngeth hym to hele."

But now to you, ye lovers that ben here, 1751
Was Troylus noght in a kankerdort,⁵
That lay, and myghte the whisprynge of hem
here,
And thought, "O Lord, right now renneth my
sort⁶

¹ Forbid. ² Blinded. ³ Courtship ⁴ Guess, suspect at wagging
of a straw. ⁵ Anxiety. ⁶ Destiny.

Fully to deye, or han anon conforte ;”
 And was the firste tyme he shold hire preye
 Of love ; O myghty God ! what shal he seye !

THIRD BOOK.

Proem.

O blisful light, of which the bemes clere
 Adorneth al the thridde hevene fayre !
 O Sonnes lief,¹ O Joves doghter dere !
 Plesaunce of love, O godely debonaire,
 In gentil hertes ay redy to repayre !
 O verray cause of hele and of gladdenesse,
 Yheried² be thy myght and thy goodenesse.

In hevene and helle, and erthe and salt se,
 Is felt thy myght, if that I wol discerne ;
 As man, bryd, best, fissh, herbe, and grene tre,
 They fele in tymes, with vapour eterne,³ 11
 God loveth, and to love wol noght werne ;⁴
 And in this world no lyves creature,
 Withouten love is worth, or may endure.

Ye, Joves, first, to thilke effectes glade,
 Thorgh which that thynges lyven al and be,
 Comeneden, and *amoureux*⁵ hem made
 On mortal thynge, and, as yow lyst, ay ye
 Geve hem in love, ese, or adversite ;
 And in a thousand formes down hym sente 20
 For love in erthe, and whom you list he hente.⁶

¹ Love of Phœbus Apollo. ² Praised. ³ Eternal inspiration (τ.
⁴ Deny. ⁵ Social and amorous. ⁶ Seized.

Ye fierse Mars apesen of his ire,
And as you list ye maken hertes digne ;
Algates hem that ye wol sette a fyre,
They dreden shame, and vices they resigne ;
Ye don hem curteis be, fresshe and benigne,
And heigh or lowe, eftir a wight entendeth,
The joies that he hath youre myght it sendeth.

Ye holden regne¹ and hous in unite ;
Ye sothfast cause of frendshipe ben also ; 30
Ye know al thilke covered qualite
Of thynges, which that folk on wondren so ;
When they kan noght construe how it may go
She loveth hym, or why he loveth here,
As why this fish, and noght that, cometh to
were.²

Ye folk a lawe han sette in universe,
And this know I by hem that loveres be,³
That who-so stryveth with you hath the worse.
Now, lady bryghte ! for thy benignite,
At reverence of hem that serven the, 40
Whos clerik I am, so techeth me devyse
Some joye of that is felt in thy servyse.

Ye, in my nakyd herte sentement
Inhilde,⁴ and do me shew of thy swetnesse !
Caliope,⁵ thy vois be now presente,
For is now nede ; sestow noght my distresse ?
How I mot telle anon-right the gladnesse
Of Troylus, to Venus herynge,⁶
To which who nede hath, God hym brynge !

¹ Realm. ² Weir. ³ Not by experience, Chaucer is always care-
ful to say. ⁴ Pour in ⁵ Epic Muse. ⁶ Praising.

The Story.

Lay al this mene-while Troylus 50
 Recordynge his lesson in this manere :
 "Ma fey!" thoght he, "thus wol I seye, and
 thus ;
 Thus wol I pleyne unto my lady deere ;
 That worde is goode, and this shal be my
 chere ;
 This nyl I noght forgeten in no wyse."
 God leve hym werken as he gan devyse.

And, lord ! so that his herte gan to quappe,¹
 Heryng hire com, and shorte for to sike ;
 And Pandarus, that ledde hire by the lappe,²
 Com ner, and gan in at the curtyn pike,³ 60
 And seyde, "God do bote on alle sike !
 Se who is here you comen to vysite,
 Lo, here is she that is youre deth to wyte !" ⁴

Therwith it semed as he wepte almost,
 "Ha ! a !" quod Troylus so reufully,
 "Wher ⁵ me be wo, O myghty God, thou wost !
 Who is al ther ? I se noght trewely."
 "Sire," quod Cryseyde, "it is Pandare and I."
 "Ye, swete herte ? allas ! I may noght rise
 To knele, and do you honour in som wyse." 70

And dressed hym upwarde, and she right tho
 Gan both hire hondes soft upon hym leye,
 "O, for the love of God, do ye noght so

¹ Quiver. ² Lappet. ³ Peep. ⁴ Blame. ⁵ Whether.

To me," quod she, "I! what is this to seye?
 Syr, comen am I to you for causes tweye,
 First you to thanke, and of youre lordshipe
 eke

Continuaunce I wolde you byseke."

This Troylus, that herde his lady preye
 Of hym lordship, wex neyther quy¹ ne dede;
 Ne myght o worde for shame to it seye, 80
 Althogh men sholde smyten of his hede;
 But, lord! so he wex sodeynlyche rede!
 And, sire, his lesson, that he wende konne
 To preyen hire, is thorgh his wit yronne.²

Cryseyde al this aspied wel ynogh,
 For she was wis, and loved hym nevere the
 lasse,

Al ner he malapert,³ or made it tough,
 Or was to bold to synge a fole masse;
 But, when his shame gan somewhat to passe,
 His resons, as I may my rymes holde, 90
 I you wol telle, as techen bokes olde.

In chaunged vois, right for his verray drede,
 Which voys ek quook, and therto his manere
 Goodly abayst,⁴ and now his hewes rede,
 Now pale, unto Cryseyde, his lady deere,
 With loke doun cast, and humble iyolden⁵
 chere,

Lo! the alderfirst worde that hym asterte,
 Was tweyes, "Mercy, mercy, swete-herte."⁶

¹ Alive. ² Gone from him. ³ Impudent. ⁴ Abashed. ⁵ Returned
⁶ Cf. *Dethe of Blaunche*, l. 1219

And stynte a while, and when he myght oute
brynge,

The nexte worde was, "God woot for I have,
As faithfully as I have hadde konnyng, 101
Ben youres alle, so God my soule save !
And shal, tyl that I, woful wight, be grave ;¹
And thogh I dar, ne kan, unto you pleyne,
Ywis I suffer noght the lasse peyne.

" Thus muche as now, O wommanliche wif,
I may oute brynge, and if this you displese,
That shal I wreke upon myn owen lif
Right soon, I trow, and do your herte an ese,
If with my deth youre herte I may apese : 110
But syn that ye han herd me somewhat seye,
Now reche I nevere how soon that I deye."

Therwith his manly sorwe to beholde,
It myght han maad an herte of stone to rewe ;
And Pandare wep as he to water wolde,²
And poked³ ever his nece new and newe,
And seyde, " Wo bigon ben hertes trewe !
For love of God, make of this thyng an ende,
Or sle us both atones, er that ye wende !"

" Aye ! what !" quod she, " by God and by
my trouthe ! 120

I not⁴ nat what ye wilne that I seye."

" " Aye ! what !" quod he, " that ye han on
hym rewthe,

For Goddes love, and doth⁵ hym noght to
deye."

¹ Buried. ² Dissolve ³ Incited. ⁴ Know not. ⁵ Cause.

"Now than thys," quod she, "I wolde hym
preye,

To telle me the fyn of his entente,
Ye wiste I nevere wel what that he mente."

"What that I mene, O swete herte deere?"
Quod Troilus, "O goodely fresshe fre!
That, with the streame of youre eighen clere,
Ye wolde somtyme freshely on me se, 130
And thanne agreeen that I may ben he,
Withouten braunche of vyce, on any wyse,
In trouth alway to don you my servyse,

"As to my lady right, and chief resorte,
With al my wit and al my diligence;
And I to han right as you list conforte,
Under youre yerde¹ egal to myn offence,
As deth, if that I breke youre defence;²
And that ye deigne me so muchel honoure,
Me to comaunden aught in any houre. 140

"And I to ben youre veray humble trewe,
Secret, and in my peynes pacient,
And everemo desiren, freshly newe,
To serven, and ben ay ylike diligent,
And, with goode herte, al holly youre talent³
Receyven wel, how soore that me smerte:
Lo, this mene I, myn owen swete herte!"

Quod Pandarus, "Lo, here an hard requeste,
And resonable, a lady for to warne!
Now, nece myn, by Natal Joves⁴ feste, 150

¹ Rod, *i. e.*, government. ² Your prohibition. ³ Desire. ⁴ Jupiter, lord of destinies, presided over nativities.

Were I a god, ye sholden sterve as yerne,¹
 That heren wel this man wol nothyng yerne²
 But your honoure, and sen hym almost sterve,
 And ben so loth to suffre³ hym you serve."

With that she gan hire eyen on hym caste
 Ful esyly, and ful debonayrly
 Avysynge hire, and hyede noght to faste,
 With nevere a word, but seyde hym softely,
 "Myn honour sauf, I wol wel trewely,
 And in swiche forme as he can now devyse, 160
 Receyven hym fully to my servyse ;

"Besechynge hym, for Goddes love, that he
 Wolden in honour of treuthe and gentillesse,
 As I wel mene, eke menen wele to me :
 And myn honour, with wit and bysinesse,
 Ay kepe ; and, if I may don hym gladdenesse,
 From hennesforth ywis I nyl noght feyne :
 Now beth al hoole ! No longer ye ne pleyne !

"But, natheles, this werne I you," quod she,
 "A kynges sone al-thogh ye be ywis, 170
 Ye shul namore han sovereynte
 Of me in love, than right in that cas is ;
 Ny nyl forbere, if that ye do amys,
 To wrethe⁴ you, and whil that ye me serve.
 Chericen you, right efter ye disserve.

"And shortly, deere herte and al my knyghte
 Neth glad, and draweth you to lustinesse,⁵
 And I shal trewely, with al my myght,
 Your bittre tornen al into swetenesse ;

¹ Die as quickly. ² Desire. ³ Permit. ⁴ Anger. ⁵ Mirth.

If I be she that may do you gladnesse, 180
For every wo ye shal recovere a blisse ;"
And hym in armes took, and gan hym kysse.

Fil Pandarus on knees, and up his eyen
To hevene threwe, and helde hise hondes
highe :

"Immortal god !" quod he, "that maist noght
dyen,

Cupide I mene, of this maist glorifye !
And Venus ! thou maist maken melodye !
Withouten honde me semeth that in the toun,
For this merveille Ich here ech belle soun.

"But ho ! namore as now of this matere, 190
For-why this folk wol comen up anon,
That han the lettre red ; lo, I hem here,
But I conjure the, Cryseyde, and oon
And two, thou, Troylus, wan thou maist gon,
That at myn hous ye ben at my warnynge,
For I ful wele shal shape youre comynge.

"And eseth there youre hertes right ynogh,
And, lat se, which of you shal bere the belle
To speke of love aright ?" (therwith he lough,) 200
"For ther have ye a leyser for to telle."
Quod Troylus, "How longe shal I dwelle
Er this be don ?" Quod he, "Whan thou maist
rise

This thyng shal be right as I you devyse."

With that Eleyne and also Deiphebus
Tho comen upward right at the steyses ende ;
And, lord ! for shame gan gronen Troylus,

His brother and his suster for to blende.
 Quod Pandarus, "It tyme is that we wende ;
 Tak, nece myn, youre leve at alle thre,
 And let hem spek, and cometh forth with me.'

She toke hire leve at hem ful thriftily, 211
 As she wel koude, and they hire reverence
 Unto the fulle diden hardily,
 And wonder wel speken in hire absens
 Of hire, in preysynge of hire excellence ;
 Hire governaunce, hire wit, and hire manere
 Comendiden they, it joie was to here.

Now lat hire wende unto hire owen place,
 And torne we to Troylus ageyn,
 That gan ful lightly of the letre pace, 220
 That Deiphebus hadde in the gardyn seyn ;
 And of Eleyne and hym¹ he wolde feyne
 Delivered ben, and seyde that hym leste
 To slepe, and efter tales² han a reste.

Eleyne hym kyste, and toke hire leve blyve,
 Deiphebus eke, and hom wente every wyght ;
 And Pandarus, as fast as he may dryve,
 To Troylus tho com, as lyne right ;³
 And on a paillet, al that glade nyght,
 By Troylus he lay, with mery chere 230
 To tale, and wel was hym they were ifere.⁴

When every wight was voided but they two,
 And alle the dores were faste yschette,
 To telle in shorte, withouten wordes mo,
 This Pandarus, withouten any lette,

¹ Deiphobus. ² The talking. ³ In a straight line. ⁴ Together

Up roos, and on his beddes syde hym sette,
And gan to speken in a sobre wyse
To Troylus, as I shal you devyse.

“Myn alderlevest ¹ lord, and brother deere,
God woot, and thou, that it sat me so soore 240
When I the saugh so langwisshynge to-yeer ²
For love, of which thy wo wax alway more ;
That I, with al my myght and al my loore,
Have evere sithen don my bysnesse
To bringe thee to joie oute of distresse.

“And have it broght to swiche plit as thou
woost,
So that thorgh me thou stondest now in weye
To faren wel, I seye it for no boste ;
And wostow why? For, shame it is to seye,
For the have I bigonne a game pleye, 250
Whiche that I nevere do shal eft for othere,
Al-thogh he were a thousand fold my brother.

“That is to seye, for the I am bicomen,
Bytwyxen game and earnest, swich a meene, ³
As maken wommen unto men to comen ;
Al seye I noght, — thou wost wel what I mene ;
For the have I my nece, of vices clene,
So fully maad thy gentillesse to triste,
That al shal be right as thyselven liste.

“But God, that al woote, tak I to wittenesse,
That nevere I this for coveytise ywroghte, 261
But onely for tabregge that distresse,

¹ Most loved of all. ² This year. ³ Cf. *Troilus and Cressida*,
act iii., sc. 2, l. 208; *Much Ado about Nothing*, act v., sc. 2, l. 31

For which welneigh thou dydest, as me thoghte
 But, goode brother, do now as the oghte,
 For Goddes love, and kepe hyre oute of blame
 Syn thou art wis, and save alwey hire name.

“For wele thou woost, the name as yet of hire
 Among the peple, as whc seith,¹ halowed is ;
 For that man is unbore, I dar wel swere,
 That evere wiste yet that she dide amys ; 27c
 But wo is me, that I, that cause al this,
 May thenken that she is my nece deere,
 And I hire em, and traitor eke ifeere !

“And, were it wist, that I, thorgh myn engyn,
 Hadde in my nece yput this fantasye
 To don thy luste, and holly to ben thyn,
 Why, al the worlde upon it wolde crye,
 And seyn, that I the werste trecherye
 Dide in this cas, that evere was bygonne,
 And she forloste,³ and thou right nocht ywonne.

“Wherefore, er I wol forther gon a pas,⁴ 281
 Yet eft I the biseche and fully seye,
 That pryvete go with us in this caas ;
 That is to seyn, that thou nevere us wreye ;⁵
 And be not wroth, though I the ofte preye
 To holden secre swich an heigh matere ;
 For skylful⁶ is, thou woost wel, my preyere.

“And thynk what wo ther hath bityd or this
 For makynge of avauntes,⁷ as men rede ; 289
 And what meschaunce in this worlde yet ther is.

¹ So to say. See i. 1011. ² Contrivance. ³ Completely lost
 Step. ⁴ Betray. ⁵ Reasonable. ⁷ Boasts

Fro day to day, right for that wikked dede ;
For which this wise clerkes that ben dede
Han evere this proverbed to us yonge,
That 'firste vertu ¹ is to kepe tonge.'

"And, ner it that I wilne as now tabregge
Diffusion of speche, I koude almoost
A thousand olde stories the alegge
Of wommen lost thorgh fals and fooles bost,
Proverbes kanst thy-self ynow, and woost,
Ageyns that vice, as for to ben a labbe,² 300
Al seyde men soth as often as they gabbe.

"O tong, allas ! so often here biforne
Hastow made many a lady bright of hewe
Seyd 'Waylawey, the day that I was born !'
And many a maydes sorwes for to newe ;
And, for the more part, al is untrew
That men of yelpe, and it were broght to preve ;
Of kynde non avauntour is to leve.³

"Avauntour and a lyer, al is oone ;
As thus : I pose ⁴ a womman graunt me 310
Hire love, and seith that other wol she noon,
And I am sworn to holden it secree,
And efter I go telle it two or thre ;
Ywis I am avauntor, at the leeste,
And lyer, for I breke my byheste.

"Now loke than if they be noght to blame, —
Swich manere folk, what shal I clepe hem ?
what ? —

¹ Cf. *Canterbury Tales*, l. 18,273. ² Biab. ³ By nature no boaster
to be believed. ⁴ Suppose.

That hem avaunte of wommen, and by name,
 That yet bihighte ¹ hem never this ne that,
 Ne knew hem no more than myn olde hatte ?
 No wonder is, so God me sende hele,² 321
 Thogh wommen dreden with us men to deele !

“ I seye noght this for no mystruste of yow,
 Ne for no wyse men, but for foles nyce ;
 And for the harme that in the world is now,
 As wel for folye oft as for malice ;
 For wel woot I, in wyse folk, that vice
 No womman drat,³ if she be wel avised,
 For wise ben by foles harm chastised. 329

“ But now to purpos : leeve brother deere,
 Have al this thyng that I have seyde in mynde,
 And kepe the clos, and be now of goode chere,
 For at thy day thou shalt me trewe fynde ;
 I shal thy processe sette in swiche a kynde,
 And God toforn, that it shal the suffise,
 For it shal ben right as thou wolt devyse.

“ For wel I woot, thou menest wel, *parde !*
 Therfor I dar this fully undertake ;
 Thou woost eke what thy lady graunted the,
 And day is set the chartres up to make ; 340
 Have now goode nyght, I may no longer wake,
 And bid ⁵ for me, syn thow ert now in blisse,
 That God me sende dethe or soone lysse ! ” ⁶

Who myghte tellen half the joye or the feest
 Whiche that the soule of Troylus tho felte,
 Herynge theeffecte of Pandarus biheste ?

¹ Promised. ² Healeth. ³ Dread. ⁴ Wait. ⁵ Pray. ⁶ Relieve

His olde wo, that made his herte swelte,
 Gan tho for joye to wasten, and to melte,
 And al the rehetyng ¹ of his sikes soore
 Atones fledde, he felte of hem namore. 350

But right so as thise holtes and thise hayis,²
 That han in wynter dede ben and drye,
 Revesten hem in greene, wnen that May is,
 When every lusty lyketh best to pleye ;
 Ryghte in that selve wyse, soth for to seye,
 Wax sodeynliche his herte ful of joie,
 That gladdere was ther never man in Troye ;

And gan his looke on Pandarus up caste
 Ful sobrelly, and frendly for to se,
 And seyde, "Frend, in Aperil the laste, 360
 As wel thou woost, if it remembre the,
 How neigh the deth for wo thou founde me,
 And how thou didest al thy besynesse
 To know of me the cause of my distresse.

"Thow woost how longe I it forbare to seye
 To the, that ert the man that I best triste, —
 And peril non was it to the to biwreye,³
 That wiste I wele, — but telle me, if the liste,
 Sith I so loth was that thi-self it wiste,
 How dorst I mo tellen of this matere, 370
 That quake now, and ⁴ no wight may us here ?

"But natheles, by that God I the sweere,
 That, as hym list, may al this world governe, —
 And if I lye, Achilles with his speere
 Myn herte cleve, al were my lyfe eterne,

¹ Ardor. ² Woods and hedges. ³ Confess. ⁴ Though.

As I am mortal, — if I, late or yerne,¹
 Wold it biwreye, or dorst, or sholde, or konne,
 For all the goode that God made under
 sonne, —

“ That rather deye I wolde, and determyne,²
 As thynketh me, now stokked³ in prisone, 380
 In wrechednesse, in filthe, and in vermyne,
 Caytif to cruel kynge Agamemnoun ;
 And this in alle the temples of this toun,
 Upon the Goddes alle, I wil the swere
 To morwe day, if that it lyketh the here.

“ And that thou hast so much ydo for me,
 That I ne may it nevere more disserve,
 This knowe I wel, al myghte I now for the
 A thousand tymes on a morwen sterve.
 I kan namore, but that I wol the serve 390
 Right as thy sclave, whider so thou wende,
 For evere more, unto my lyves ende.

“ But here, with al myn herte, I the biseche
 That nevere in me thou deme swiche folye
 As I shal seyn ; me thoghte, by thy speche,
 That this whiche thou me doste for companye,
 I sholde wene it were a bauderye ;
 I am noght wode, alle-if I lewed be ;
 It is noght so, that woot I wel, *parde !*

“ But he that goth for gold, or for richesse, 400
 On swich message, cal him what the liste ;
 And this that thou dost, call it ‘ gentilnesse,’
 ‘ Compassyon,’ and ‘ felawschyp,’ and ‘ truste ;

¹ Soon. ² End. ³ Confined in stocks.

Departe¹ it so, for wide-where is wiste
 How that ther is dyversite requered,
 Bytwexen thynges lyke, as I have lered.

“And that thou knowe I thynke noght ne
 wene,

That this servyse a shame be or a jape,
 I have my faire suster Polixene,
 Cassandre, Eleyne, or any of the frape;² 410
 Be she nevere so faire, or wel yshape,
 Tel which thou wilt of everychon
 To han for thyn, and lat me thanne allone.

“But sith that thou hast don me this servyse
 My lif to save, and for non hope of mede;³
 So, for the love of God, this grete emprise
 Parforme it out, for now is moste nede;
 For heigh and lough, withouten any drede,
 I wol alway thine hestis alle kepe. 419
 Have now gode nyght, and lat us bothe slepe.”

Thus held hem ech of other wel apayed,⁴
 That al the world ne myghte it bet amende;
 And on the morwe, when they were arayed,
 Ech to his owen nedes gan entende:
 But Troylus, thogh as the fire he brende
 For sharpe desire of hope and of plesaunce,
 He noght forgot his goode governaunce;

But in hymself with manhode gan restreyne
 Ech rackle⁵ dede, and ech unbrideled chere,⁶
 That alle tho that lyven, soth to seyne, 430

¹ Distinguish. ² Troop. ³ Reward. ⁴ Satisfied. ⁵ Rash
 Ungoverned look.

Ne sholde han wiste, by word or by manere,
 What that he mente, as touchynge this matere
 From every wyght as fer as is the cloude
 He was, so wele dissimulen he koude.

And al the while which that I yow devyse,
 This was his lyf ; with al his fulle myghte,
 By day he was in Martes heighe servyse ;
 This is to seyn, in armes as a knyghte ;
 And for the more part, the longe nyght,
 He lay, and thocht how that he myghte serve
 His lady best, hire thonke for to deserve. 441

Nyl I noght swere, althogh he lay softe,
 That in his thocht he nas somewhat disesed,¹
 Ne that he torned on his pilwes ofte,
 And wald of that he myssed han ben sesed ;²
 But in swich cas men is noght alwey plesed,
 For oght I woot, namore than was he ;
 Than kan I deme of possibilite.

But certeyn is, to purpos for to go,
 That in this while, as writen is in geste,³ 45c
 He say his lady somtyme ; and also
 She with hym spake when that she dorst and
 liste ;

And, by hire both avys, as was the beste,
 Apoynteden ful warly in this neðe,
 So as they dorst, how they wolden procede.

But it was spoken in so short a wyse,
 In swich awayt⁴ alwey, and in swich fere,
Lest any wight devynen, or devyse

¹ Discomforted. ² Possessed. ³ Story. ⁴ So furtively.

Wold of hem two, or to it ley an ere,
 That al this world so leve to hem ne were, 460
 As that Cupide wold hem grace sende
 To maken of hire speche aright an ende.

But thilke litel that they spake or wroughte,
 His wise goost took ay of al swich hede,
 It semed hire he wiste what she thoughte,
 Withouten word, so that it was no nede
 To bid hym oght to don, or oght forbede;
 For which she thoughte that love, al come it
 late,

Of alle joie hadde opened hire the gate.

And shortly of this proces for to pace, 470
 So wel his werk and wordes he bisette,
 That he so ful stood in his lady grace,
 That twenti thousand tymes, or she lette,¹
 She thanked God that evere she with hym mette,
 So koude he hym governe in swich servyse,
 That al the world ne myght it bet avyse.

For-why she fonde hym so discrete in al,
 So secrete, and of swich obeysaunce,
 That wel she felte he was to hire a wal
 Of stiel, and shield from every displesaunce;
 That to be in his goode governaunce, 481
 So wis he was, she was namore arered,
 I mene as fer as oughte ben requered.

And Pandarus, to quyke² alwey the fire,
 Was evere yholde prest³ and diligent;
 To ese his frende was sette al his desire.

¹ Ere she stopped ² Quicken. ³ Ready.

He shof ay on,¹ — he to and fro was sent, —
 He lettres bar whan Troylus was absente ;
 That nevere man, as in his frendes nede,
 Ne ber hym bet thanne he, withouten drede. 490

But now, paraunter, som man wayten² wolde
 That every worde, or sonde,³ or looke, or chere
 Of Troylus, that I rehercen sholde,
 In al this while, unto his lady deere ;
 I trowe it were a longe thyng for to here ;
 Or of what wight that stant in swich disjoynte
 His wordes alle, or every look, to poynte.

Forsoth I have noght herd it don er this
 In storie non, ne no man here, I weene ;
 And thogh I wolde, I koude noght, ywis ; 500
 For ther was som epistel hem bytwene,
 That wolde, as seith myn auctour, wele contene
 Neigh half this boke, of which hym liste noght
 wryte ;

How shold I thanne a lyne of it endite ?

But to the grete effect. Thanne sey I thus,
 That stondyng in concord and in quiete
 This ilke twey, Cryseyde and Troylus,
 As I have tolde, and in this tyme swete,
 Save only often myghte they not mete,
 Ne leyser have, hire speches to fulfille, 510
 That it befel right as I shal yow telle ;

That Pandarus, that evere dide his myght,
 Right for the fyn⁴ that I shal spek of here,
 As for to bryngen to his hous som nyghte

¹ Steered right onward. ² Expect. ³ Message. ⁴ End.

His faire nece and Troylus yfere,¹
 Wher as at layser al this heigh matere
 Touchynge hire love wer' at the fulle up-bounde,
 Hadde oute of doute a tyme to it founde.

For he, with grete deliberacioun,
 Hadde every thyng that hereto myght availle
 Forncast, and put in execucioun, 521
 And neither left for cost ne for travaile ;
 Come if hem lest, hym sholde no thynge faille,
 And for to ben in oghte aspied there,
 That wiste he wel an impossible were.

Dredeles it clere was in the wynde²
 Of every pie, and every lette-game ;³
 Now alle is wel, for al the world is blynde
 In this matere, bothe fremed⁴ and tame ;
 'This tymbyr is al redy up to frame ; 530
 " Us lakketh noght, but that we witen wolde
 A certain oure, in whiche she comen sholde."

And Troylus, that al this purveiaunce
 Knew at the fulle, and waited on it ay,
 Hadde hereupon ek made grete ordinaunce,
 And fonde his cause, and therto his aray,
 That if that he were myssed nyght or day,
 The while he was abouten this servyse,
 That he was gon to don his sacrificse,

And moste at swich a temple allone wake,⁵
 Auswerde of Apollo for to be, 541
 And first to sen the holy laurer quake,⁶

¹ Together. ² To the windward. ³ Hinderer. ⁴ Wild. ⁵ Watch alone. ⁶ Daphne, beloved by Apollo, was changed into a laurel, which became sacred to the god.

Er that Apollo spake oute of the tre,
 To tele hym next when that the Greekes
 sholde fle ;

And forthi lette¹ hym no man, God forbede !
 But preye Apollo helpen in this nede.

Now is ther litel more for to doone,
 But Pandare up, and shortly for to seyne,
 Right soone upon the chaungynge of the moone
 Whan lightlees is the world, a nyght or tweyne
 And that the welken shope hym for to reyne,
 He streight o morwe unto his nece wente ; 552
 Ye han wel herde the fyn of his entente.

Whan he was come, he gan anon to pleye,
 As he was wont, and of hymself to jape ;
 And finally he swore, and gan hire seye,
 By this and that, she shold hym noght escape,
 Ne lenger don hym efter hire to gape ;
 But certainly, she moste, by hire leve,
 Come soupen in his hous with hym at eve. 560

At which she lough, and gan hire faste ex-
 cuse,

And seyde : " It reyneth, lo ! how shold I
 gon ? "

" Lat be," quod he, " ne stand noght thus to
 muse,

'This mot be done, ye shal be ther anon."

So, at the last, hereof they fel atone,²

Or elles soft he swor hire in hire ere,

He nolde nevere comen ther she were.

¹ Therefore hinder. ² At one.

Soone after this, she to hym gan to rowne,¹
 And axed hym if Troylus wer there ;
 He swor hire nay, for he was oute of toun, 570
 And seyde, " Nece, I pose that he were,
 Thow thruste² nevere han the more fere ;
 For rather than men myght hym ther asprie,
 Me were lever a thousand folde to deye."

Noght list myn auctour fully to declare,
 What that she thoughte when he seide so,
 That Troylus was oute of toun yfare,
 As if he seyde therof soth or no ;
 But that, without awayt,³ with hym to go,
 She graunted hym, sith he hire that bisoughte,
 And, as his nece, obeyed as hire oghte. 581

But natheles, yet gan she hym biseche,
 Al thogh with hym to gon it was no fere,
 For to be war of goofish⁴ peples speche,
 That dremen thynges which as never were :
 And wel avyse hym whom he broughte there,
 And seyde hym, " Em,⁵ syn I most on yow triste,
 Look al be wel ; I do now as yow liste."

He swor hire yis ! by stokkes and by stones,
 And by the goddes that in hevene dwelle, 590
 Or elles were hym levere, soule and bones,
 With Pluto kynge as depe ben in helle
 As Tantalus : what shold I more telle ?
 When alle was wel he roos and tooke his leve,
 And she to soper come when it was eve,

¹ Whisper. ² Durst. ³ Delay. ⁴ Stupid (Fr. *goffe*, *gauche*, awkward). ⁵ Uncle.

With a certeyn of hire owne men,
 And with hire faire nece Antigone,
 And other of hire wommen, nyne or ten.
 But who was glade? now who, as trowe ye,
 But Troylus, that stood and myght it se 600
 Thorgh out a litel wyndowe in a stewe,¹
 Ther he bishet,² sen mydnyght, was in mewe,
 Unwist of every wyght but of Pandare.
 But to the pointe: now when she was ycome,
 With alle joie, and alle frendes fare,
 Hire em anon in armes hath hire nome,³
 And efter to the soper alle and some,
 When tyme was, ful softe they hem sette;
 God woot ther was no deynte for to fette.⁴

And after soper gonnen they to ryse, 610
 At ese wele, with herte fresshe and glade,
 And wel was hym that koude beste devyse
 To liken⁵ hire, or that hire laughen made;
 He song, she pleyde, he tolde tale of Wade:⁶
 But at the last, as every thyng hath ende,
 She tooke hire leve, and nedes wolde wende.

But O Fortune, executrice of wierdes!⁷
 O influences of thise hevenes hye!
 Soth is, that, under God, ye ben oure hierdes,
 Thogh to us bestes ben the causes wrye:⁸ 620
 This mene I now for she gan homward hye;
 But execut was, al byside hire leve,¹⁰
 At the goddes wil, for which she moste bleve.

¹ Closet. ² Shut up. ³ Taken. ⁴ Fetch, *i. e.*, lacking. ⁵ Please
⁶ Cf. *Canterbury Tales*, l. 13,760. ⁷ Fates. ⁸ Shepherds. ⁹ Hid
¹⁰ Inclination. ¹¹ Remain.

The bente Moone with hire hornes pale,
Saturne and Jove in Cancro joyned were,
That swich a reyne from hevene gan avale,¹
That every manere woman that was there
Hadde of that smoky reyn a verray fere ;
At which Pandare tho lough, and seyde thenne,
"Now were it tyme a lady to gette henne ! 630

"But, goode nece, if I myght evere plesse
Yow any thyng, than preyte I yow," quod he,
"To don myn nerte as now so grete an ese,
As for to dwelle here al this nyght with me ;
For-why this is youre owene hous, *parde* !
Now, by my 'rowth, I sey it noght a game,
To wende as now, it were to me a shame."

Cryseyde, which that coude as muche good²
As half a world, took hede of his preyere ;
And syn it ron,³ and alle was on a flode, 640
She thoght, "As good chep⁴ may I dwelle here,
And graunte it gladly with a frendes chere,
And have a thank, as gruche and thanne abide,
For hom to gon it may noght wele bitide."

"I wol," quod she, "myn uncle lief and dere,
Syn that yow list, it skyl⁵ is to be so ;
I am right glad with yow to dwellen here,
I seyde but a game I wolde go."
"Ywis, *graunte mercy*,⁶ nece !" quod he tho ;
"Were it a game or no, soth for to telle, 650
Now I am glad, syn that yow list to dwelle."

¹ Descend. ² Understood propriety as well. ³ Rained. ⁴ Literally, "as cheaply." ⁵ Reasonable. ⁶ Many thanks.

Thus al is wele ; but tho bigan aright
 The newe joie, and al the fest agayne ;
 But Pandarus, if goodly hadde he myght,
 He wold han hyed¹ hire to bedde fayne,
 And seyde, " Lord ! this is an huge reyne !
 This were a weder for to slepen inne,
And that I rede² us soon bigynne.

" And nece, woote ye where I wol yow leye,
 For that we shullen not liggen fer a sonder,
 And for ye neither shullen, dar I seye, 661
 Heren noise of reynes, nor of thonder ?
 By God, right in my lite closet yonder ;
 And I wol in that outter hous, alone,
 Be warden of youre wommen everychon.

" And in this myddel chaumber that ye se
 Shal youre wommen slepen wel and softe ;
 And ther I seyde shal youre-selven be ;
 And if ye liggen wel to nyght, come ofte,
 And careth noght what weder is alofte. 670
 The wyn³ anon ! and whan so that yow leste,
 Go we to slepe, I trow it be the beste."

Ther nys no moore, but here-efter soone
 They voide,⁴ dronke, and traverses⁵ drawe anon ;
 Gan every wyghte, that hadde noght to done
 More in the place, oute of the chaumber gone ,
 And everemore so sternelich it ron,⁶
 And blew therwith so wonderliche loude, 678
 That wel neighe no man heren other koude.

¹ Hastened. ² Advise. ³ Cf. *Canterbury Tales*, l. 819. ⁴ **Go**
but. ⁵ Curtains. ⁶ Violently it rained.

Tho Pandarus, hire em, right as hym oghte,
With wommen, swiche as were hire most aboute,
Ful glad unto hire beddes syde hire broghte ;
And took his levé, and gan ful lowe loute,¹
And seyde, " Here at this closet dore withoute,
Right overthwart, youre wommen liggen alle,
That whom yow list of hem, ye may here calle."

Lo, when that she was in the closet leyde,
And alle hire wommen forth by ordinaunce
Abedde weren, ther as I have seyde,
There was namore to skipen ne to taunce,² 690
But boden³ go to bedde, with mischaunce !
If any wight was sterynge⁴ any where,
And lat hem slepen, that abedde were.

But Pandarus, that wel koude ech a deele⁵
The olde daunce, and every poynt therinne,
When that he seye⁶ that alle thyng was wele,
He thought he wolde upon his werk bygynne ;
And gan the stewe dore al soft unpynne,
As stille as stone ; withouten langer lette,
By Troylus adoun right he hym sette. 700

And, shortly to the pointe right for to gon,
Of alle this werk he told hym worde and ende,⁷
And seyde, " Make the redy right anon,
For thow shalt into hevene blisse wende."
" Now, blissful Venus ! thow me grace sende !"
Quod Troylus, " for nevere yet no nede
Hadde I er now, ne halvendeel⁸ the drede."

¹ Bow. ² Dance. ³ Bidden. ⁴ Stirring. ⁵ Knew every portion of. ⁶ Saw. ⁷ Cf. ii. 1495. ⁸ Half.

Quod Pandarus, "Ne drede the nevere a dele,
For it shal be right as thow wolt desire ;
So thryve I, this nyght shal I make it wele, 710
Or casten al the gewel in the fyre."

"Now, blisful Venus! this nyght thow me en-
spire,"

Quod Troylus, "as wys¹ as I the serve,
And evere bet and bet shal til I sterve.

"An if I hadde, O Venus ful of myrthe!
Aspectes badde of Mars or of Saturne,
Or thow combust,² or let were in my byrth,
Thy fader prey al thylke harme desturne³
Of grace, and that I glad agein may turne, 719
For love of hym thou lovedest in the shawe,⁴
I mene Adon, that with the bore was slawe.

"O Jove! ek for the love of fayre Europe,⁵
The which in forme of bool away thow fette: ⁶
Now help, O Mars, thow with thy blody cope,⁷
For love of Cypres,⁸ thow me noght ne lette!
O Phebus! thynke when Dane⁹ hire-selven
shette

Under the bark and laurer wax for-drede,
Yet for hire love, O help now at this nede!

"Mercure! for the love of Hierse¹⁰ eke,
For whiche Pallas was with Aglowros wroth,
Now help! and ek Diane! I the biseke, 731

¹ Truly. ² Overcome by the Sun. ³ Turn aside. ⁴ Shade. ⁵ Europa, carried away by Jove, who took the form of a bull. ⁶ Fetchest Top, head. ⁷ Venus. Cf. *Parlement of Foules*, l. 277. See *Odyssey*, viii. ⁸ Daphne. Cf. iii. 542. ⁹ Herse, daughter of Cecrops, and sister of Agraalos. Mercury loved her and Pallas Athens was jealous of her.

That this viage be noght to the loth :
O fatal sustren ! which, er any cloth¹
Me shapen was, my desteyne me sponne,
So helpeth to this werk that is bygonne !”

Quod Pandarus, “Thow wreched mowses
herte !

Artow agast so that she wil the byte ?
Why, don this furred cloke upon thy sherte,
And folowe me, for I wol han the wyte ;²
But bide, and lat me gon byforne a lyte ;” 740
And with that word he gan undon a trappe,
And Troylus he brought in by the lappe.³

The sterne wynde so loude kan to route⁴
That no wight other noyse myghte here ;
And they that layen at the dore withoute,
Ful sikirly they slepten al yfeere,⁵
And Pandarus, with a ful sobre chere,
Goth to the dore anon, withouten lette,
Ther as they laye, and softlytly it shette.

And, as he come ageynward pryvely, 750
His nece awoke, and axed, “Who goth there ?”
“My dere nece,” quod Pandare, “it am I, —
Ne wondereth noght, ne have of it no fere ;”
And nere⁶ he com, and seyde hire in hire ere,
“No word, for love of God I yow biseche,
Lat no wight risc and heren of oure speche.”

“What ? whiche way be ye comer ? bene
dicite !”

¹ Cf. *Canterbury Tales*, l. 1566, and *Legenae of Goode Women*, 3628. ² Blame. ³ A loose portion of his garment ⁴ Howl Together ⁵ Nearer.

Quod she, "and how unwiste of hem alle!"

"Here at this secre trappe dore," quod he.

Quod tho Cryseyde, "Lat me some wight
calle!" 760

"Ey! God forbede that it sholde falle,"

Quod Pandarus, "that ye swich foly wroghte!

They myghte demen thynges they nevere er
thoughte.

"It is noght goode a slepyng hounde to wake,
Ne geve a wyght a cause to devyne;

Youre wommen slepen alle, I undertake,

So that for hem the hous men myghte myne,

And slepen wollen til the sonne shyne;

And when my tale broght is to an ende,

Unwyst, right as I com, so wol I wende. 770

"Now, nece myn, ye shal wel understonde,"

Quod he, "so as ye wommen demen alle,

That for to holde in love a man in honde,

And hym hire 'lief' and 'dere herte' calle,

And maken hym a howve above a calle,¹ —

I mene, as love another in this mene while, —

She doth hire-self a shame, and hym a gyle.

"Now wherby that I telle yow al this?

Ye wot youre-self as wel as any wyghte,

How that youre love alle fully graunted is 780

To Troylus, the worthieste knyghte, —

Oon of this world, — and therto trouthe
yplighte,

¹ A hood above a close-fitting cap. Cf. ii. 867, v. 469; *Canterbury Tales*, l. 3143. The idea of beguiling, deluding, is in these lines connected with the hood.

That, but it were on hym alonge,¹ ye n olde
Hym nevere falsen while ye lyven sholde.

"Now stant it thus, that, sith I fro yow wente,
This Troylus, right platly for to seyn,
Is thorgh a goter, by a pryve wente,²
Into my chaumber com in al this reyn;
Unwist of every manere wight, certeyn,
Save of myself, as wisly³ have I joye, 790
And by the feith I owe Priam of Troye!

"And he is come in swich wo and distresse,
That, but he be alle fully woode⁴ by this,
He sodeynly mot falle into wodenesse,
But-if God help: and cause why is this?
He seith hym tolde is of a frende of his,
How that ye sholden love oon, hatte⁵ Horaste,
For sorwe of whiche this nyght shal ben his
laste."

Cryseyde, which that al this wonder herde,
Gan sodeynly aboute hire herte colde,⁶ 800
And with a sik ful sorwfully answerde:

"Allas! I wende, who-so tales tolde,
My deere herte wolde me noght have holde
So lightly fals: alas! conseytes wronge,⁷
What harme they don, for now lyve I to longe!

"'Horaste?' alas! — and falsen Troylus?
I knowe hym noght, God helpe me so!" quod
she.

Allas! what wikked spir't tolde hym thus?

¹ For his fault. ² Passage. ³ Truly. ⁴ Mad. ⁵ Named
Grow cold. ⁷ Wrong opinions.

Now certes, em, to morw, and I hym se,
 I shal therof as ful excusen me, 810
 As evere dide womman, if hym lyke ;”
 And with that worde she gan ful sore sike.

“ O God !” quod she, “ so wordly selynesse,¹
 Which clerkes callen fals felicite,
 Ymedled² is with many a bitternesse !
 Ful angwyshous than is, God woote,” quod she,
 “ Condicioun of veyn prosperite !
 For oyther joies comen noght yfeere,³
 Or elles no wight hath hem alwey here. 819

“ O, brotel wele⁴ of mannes joie unstable !
 With what wight so thou be, or how thou pleye,
 Other he woot that thou joie art muable,⁵
 Or woot it noght, it mot ben on of tweyen :
 Now if he woot it not, how may he seyen
 That he hath veray joie and selynesse,
 That is of ignoraunce ay in distresse ?

“ Now if he woote that joie is transitorie,
 As every joie of worldly thyng mot fle,
 Thanne every tyme he that hath in memorie,
 The drede of lesyng⁶ maketh hym that he 820
 May in no parfyte selynesse be :
 And if to lese his joie he sette not a myte.
 Than semeth it, that joie is worth ful lite.

“ Wherfor I wol devyne in this matere,
 That trewely, for oght I kan espie,
 There is no veray wele in this world here.

¹ Bliss. ² Mingled. ³ Together. ⁴ Brittle weal. ⁵ Changeable
 Losing ⁶ Little.

But, O thow wikked serpent Jalousie !
Thow mysbileved and envyous folye,
Why hastow made Troylus to me untruste, 839
That never yet agylte ¹ hym, that I wyste ?

Quod Pandarus, "Thus fallen is this cas."

"Why! uncle myn," quod she, "who tolde
hym this ?

Why doth my deere herte thus, allas ? "

"Ye woote, ye nece myn," quod he, "what is ;
I hope alle shal be wel, that is amys,
For ye may quenche alle this, if that yow
liste,

And doth right so, for I hold it for the beste."

"So shal I do to morw, ywis," quod she,

"And, God toforn, so that it shal suffise."

"To morwe ? allas, that were a fair ! " quod
he. 850

"Nay, nay ! it may noght stonden in this wyse :
For, nece myn, thus writen clerkes wyse,
That peril is with drecchyng ² in ydrawe ;
Nay, swich abodes ³ ben noght worth an hawe.⁴

"Nece, alle thyng hath tyme, I dar avowe ;
For when a chaumbere afire is, or an halle,
Wel more nede is it sodenly rescowe,
Than to disputen and axe amonges alle,
How is this candele in the strow yfalle ?
A ! benedicite ! for al amonge that fare, 860
The harme is don, and farewell feldefare !⁵

¹ Offended. ² Delay. ³ Delays. ⁴ Chaff, or hawthorn-berry.

⁵ This bird, a sort of thrush, must be taken at the proper times, or
the chance is lost. Cf. *Romaunt of the Rose*, l. 5513

"And, nece myne, — ne take it noght a
grief, —

If that ye suffre hym alle nyght in this wo,
God help me so, ye hadde hym nevere lief,
That dar I seyn, now ther is but we two ;
But wel I woot that ye wol nat do so ;
Ye ben to wis to don so grete folye,
To put his lif alle nyght in jupartye."

"Hadde I hym nevere lief? By God! I
wene,

Yet hadde I nevere thyng so lief!" quod she.

"Now, by my thrifte!" quod he, "that shal be
seene ;

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For, syn ye make this ensauple of me,
If Ich alle nyght wold hym in sorw se,
For alle the tresour in the town of Troye,
I bidde ¹ God I nevere mote have joye!

"Now loke thanne if ye, that ben his love,
Shul putte his lif alle nyght in jupartye,
For thyng of noght? Now, by that God above!
Noght oonly this delay comth of folye,
But of malice, if that I shal not lye: 880
What! platly,² and ye suffre hym in distresse,
Ye nother bounte³ don ne gentilnesse."

Quod she Cryseyde, "Wile ye don o thyng,
And ye therwith shal stynte alle his disese?
Have here and bereth hym this blewe⁴ rynge,
For ther is nothyng myght hym better plese,

¹ Pray. ² Plainly. ³ Goodness. ⁴ The color of truth. Cf. *Canterbury Tales*, l. 15,420.

Save I my-self, ne more his herte apese ;
And sey, my dere herte, that his sorwe
Is causeles, that shal be sene to morwe."

"A rynge?" quod he, "ye, hasel-wodes
shaken! ¹ 890

Ye, nece myne, that rying most han a stoone,
That myghte dede men alyve maken ;
And swich a rynge, trow I, that ye have noon :
Discrecion oute of youre hede is gon,
That fele I now," quod he, "and that is routhe ;
O, tyme ylost ! wel maystow corsen slouthe !

"Woot ye not wele that noble and heigh
corage

Ne sorweth noght, ne stynteth ek for lite ?

But-if a foole were in a jalous rage,

I nolde setten at his sorw a myte, 900

But fesse ² hym with a fewe wordes whyte,
Another day, when that I myght hym fynde ;
But this thyng stant al in another kynde !

"This ³ is so gentil and so tendre of herte,
That with his deth he wol his sorwes wreke ;
For, trusteth wel, how sore that hym smert,
He wol to yowe no jalous wordes speke ;
And forthy, nece, er that his herte breke,
So spek youre-self to hym of this matere ;
For with a worde ye may his herte steere.⁴ 910

"Now have I told what peril he is inne,
And his comynge unwiste is tevery wight,
Ne, *parde*, harme may ther be non, ne synne ,

¹ Nonsense. ² "Tip." ³ This mar ⁴ Direct

I wol my-self be with yow al this nyghte ;
 Ye know ek how it is youre owene knyght,
 And that, by right, ye most upon hym triste,
 And I am prest to fette ¹ hym when yow liste.'

This accident ² so pitous was to here,
 And ek so like a soth, at *pryme face*,
 And Troylus hire knyght, to hire so dere, 920
 His prive comyng, and the seker ³ place,
 That thogh that she dide hym as thanne a
 grace,

Considered alle thynges as they stode,
 No wonder is, syn she dide alle for goode.

Cryseyde answerede, "As wysly God at reste
 My soule brynge, as me is for him wo !
 And, em, ywis,⁴ fayne wold I don the beste,
 If that I grace hadde for to do so ;
 But, whether that ye dwel, or for hym go,
 I am, til God me bettere mynde sende, 930
 At dulcarnon,⁵ — right at my wittes ende."

Quod Pandarus, "Ye, nece, wil ye here ?
 'Dulcarnon' called is 'flemynge' ⁶ of wrechis ;
 It semeth hard, for wrechis wol noght lere ⁷
 For veray slouthe, or other wilful tecches ; ⁸
 'This seyde is by hem that ben noght worth two
 fecches ; ⁹

But ye ben wis, and that we han in honde
 Is neither harde, ne skylful ¹⁰ to withstonde.'

¹ Ready to fetch (Old Fr. *prest*). ² Unexpected contingency.
³ Secure. ⁴ Truly. ⁵ A dilemma. Probably a difficult mathematical problem. (*Fuga miserorum*, flight, despair of the wretched.
⁶ Flight. ⁷ Learn. ⁸ Vices. ⁹ Vetches. ¹⁰ Reasonable.

"SHE WEX SODEYNLYCHE REDE!" 527*

"Thanne, em," quod she, "doth hereof as
yow liste,

But, or he come, I wol up firste arise ; 940

And, for the love of God, syn al my triste

Is on yow two, and ye ben bothe wise,

So werketh now, in so discrete a wyse,

That I honour may have and he plesaunce,

For I am here alle in youre governaunce."

"This is wel seyde," quod he, "my nece
deere !

Ther good thrift on that wise, gentil herte !

But liggeth ¹ stille, and taketh hym right here,

It nedeth noght no ferther for him sterte ;

And ech of yow eseth otheres sorwes smerte,

For love of God ! and, Venus ! I the herye, ²

For soon hope I we shul ben alle merye." 952

This Troylus ful soone on knowes ³ hym
sette,

Ful sobrely, right by hire beddes hede,

And in his beste wyse his lady grette :

But, lord ! what she wex sodeynlyche rede !

Ne, thogh men sholde smyten of hire hede,

She koude noght o word a-right out brynge,

So sodeynly for his sodeyn comynge.

But Pandarus, that so wel koude feelee 960

In every thyng, to pleye anon byganne,

And seyde, " Nece, se how this lord can knele !

Now, for youre trouthe, se this gentil man ! "

And with that worde, he for a quysshenn ⁴ ran,

¹ Lie. ² Praise. ³ Knees ⁴ Cushion

And seyde, " Kneleth now whil that yow liste,
Ther God youre hertes bynge soone at reste ! "

Kan I noght seyn, for she bad hym noght
rise,

If sorw it putte oute of hire remembraunce ;
Or elles that she toke it in the wyse
Of duete, as for his observaunce ; ¹ 970
But wel fynde I, she did hym this plesaunce,
That she hym kyste, although she sikede soore,
And bad him sitte adoun withouten more.

Quod Pandarus, " Now wol ye wel bygynne,
Now doth hym sitte, goode nece deere,
Upon youre beddes syde, al ther withinne,
That ech of yow the bette may other here ; "
And with that word he drew hym to the fere,
And took a light, and fonde his contenaunce, ²
As for to looke upon an old romaunce. 980

Cryseyde, that was Troylus lady righte,
And clere stode on a grounde of sikernesse, ³
Al thogh that he, hire servaunt and hire knyghte,
Ne shold of right non untrouth in hire gesse ;
Yet natheles, considered his distresse,
And that love is in cause of swich folý,
Thus to hym spake she of his jalousye.

" Lo, herte myne ! as wolde the excellence
Of love, agenis the whiche that no man may,
Ne oght ek, goodly maken resistance ; 990
And ek bycause I felte wel and say ⁴
Your grete trouthe, and servyse every day ;

¹ Respect. ² Pretended. ³ Security. ⁴ Saw.

And that youre herte al myn was, soth to seyne,
This drofe me for to rew¹ upon youre peyne.

“ And youre goodenesse have I founde alway
yet,

Of which, my dere herte, and al my knyght !
I thonke it yow, as fer as I have witte,
Al kan I noght as much as it were right ;
And I, emforth² my konnyng and my myght,
Have, and ay shal, how soore that me smerte,
Ben to yow trew and hool with al my herte. 1001

“ And, dredeles, that shal ben founde at preve ;
But, herte myne, what al this is to seyne
Shal wel be tolde, so that ye noght yow greve,
’Thogh I to yow right on your-self compleyne,
For there-with mene I fynaly the peyne,
That halt³ youre herte and myn in hevynesse,
Fully to sleyn, and every wronge redresse.

“ My goode myn ! not⁴ I for why ne how
That jalousye, alas ! that wikked wyvere,⁵ 1010
Thus causeles is copen into yow,
The harm of which I wolde fayn delivere :
Allas ! that he al hool, or of hym slyvere,
Shold han his refut in so digne a place !
Ther Jove hym soone oute of youre herte
arace !⁶

“ But, O thow Jove ! O auctour of nature !
Is this an honour unto thy deyte,
That folk ungiltif suffren hire injure,
And who that giltif is, al quyte goth he ?

¹ Pity. ² Up to. ³ Holdeth. ⁴ Know not. ⁵ Serpent. ⁶ Snatch
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O, were it leful for to pleyne¹ on the, 1020
 That undeserved suffrest jalousye,
 Of that I wolde upon the pleyne and crye.

“Ek al my wo is this, that folk now usen
 To seyn right thus, ye, jalousye is love ;
 And wold a busshel venym al excusen,
 For that o greyn of love is on it shove ;
 But that woot heighe God that is above,
 If it be liker love, or hate, or grame,²
 And efter that it oghte bere his name.

“But certeyn is, som manere jalousye 1030
 Is excusable, more thanne som, ywis ;
 As when cause is, and som swich fantasie
 With piete so wele repressed is,
 That it unnethe³ doth or seyth amys,
 But goodly drynketh up al his distresse ;
 And that excuse I for the gentilesse.

“And som so ful of furie is, and despite,
 That it surmounteth his repression.
 But, herte myn, ye be not in that plite,
 That thonke I God ! for which your passioun,
 I wol noght calle it but illusioun 1041
 Of abundaunce of love, and bisy cure,
 That doth⁴ youre herte this disese endure.

“Of which I am right sory, but noght wroth .
 But for my devoire⁵ and youre hertes reste,
 Where so yow list, by ordal⁶ or by ooth,
 By sort,⁷ or in what wyse so yow leste,

¹ Lawful to complain. ² Anger, grief. ³ Scarcely. ⁴ Causes
 Duty (Fr. *devoir*). ⁶ Ordeal. ⁷ Lot.

For love of God, lat preve it for the beste ;
 And if that I be gilty, do me deye ;¹
 Allas ! what myght I more don or seyne ! " 1050

With that a fewe brighte teres newe
 Oute of her eighen fille, and thus she seyde :
 " Now, God, thow woost, in thoght ne dede
 untrewē

To Troylus was nevere yet Cryseyde ! "
 With that hire hed down in the bed she layde,
 And with the shete it wreigh, and sighte ² soore,
 And held hire pees, noght a word spak she
 more.

But now helpe, God, to quenchen al this
 sorwe !

So hope I that he shal, for he best may ;
 For I have seyn of a ful mysty morwe, 1060
 Follwen ful oft a merye someres day ;
 And efter wynter folweth grene May ;
 Men sen al day, and reden ek in storyes,
 That efter sharpe stoures ³ ben oft victories.

This Troylus, when he hire wordes herde,
 Have ye no care, hym liste noght to slepe !
 For it thoght hym no strokes of a yerde ⁴
 To here or sen Cryseyde his lady wepe ;
 But wel he felte aboute his herte crepe,
 For every tere which that Cryseyde asterte, 1070
 The craumpe of deth, to streyne hym by the
 herte,

And in his mynde he gan the tyme acorse

¹ Carre me to die. ² Hid and sighed. ³ Conflicts. ⁴ Rod.

That he com ther, and that he was yborn :
 For now is wikked torned into worse,
 And al that labour he hath don biforn,
 He wende it lost, he thocht it nas but lorne.
 "O Pandarus," thocht he, "allas ! thy wile
 Serveth of noght ; so walawey the while !"

And therwithal he henge adoun the hede, 1079
 And felle on knese, and sorwfully he sighte ;
 What myght he seyn ? he felt he was but dede
 For wrath was she that shold his sorwes lighte
 But, natheles, when that he speken myghte,
 Than seyde he thus : "God woot, that of this
 game,

When al is wiste, than am I noght to blame."

Therwith the sorwe so his herte shette,
 That from hise eyen fel ther noght a tere ;
 And every spirit his vigour inknette,
 So they astoned and oppressed were :
 The felynge of his sorwe, or of his feere, 1090
 Or of oght elles, fled were out of toune,
 And down he fel al sodeynly in swoune.

This was no litel sorwe for to se,
 For al was hust ; and Pandare up as faste,
 "O nece ! pees, or we be lost !" quod he ;
 "Beth noght agast !" but certeyn at the laste,
 For this or that, he into bed hym caste,
 And seyde, "O thef ! is this a mannes herte ?"
 And of he rente al to his bare shirte.

And seyde, "Nece, but ye help us now, 1106
 Allas ! youre owene Troylus is lorne !"

'Ywis so wold I, and I wiste how,
Ful fayn," quod she; "allas! that I was
borne!"

"Ye, nece? wille ye pulle oute the thorne
That stikketh in his herte?" quod Pandare;
"Sey, 'Al forgeven,' and stynte is al this fare."

"Ye! that to me," quod she, "ful levere
were

'Thanne al the good the sonne aboute goth!"
And therwithal she swor hym in his ere,
"Ywis, my deere herte, I am noght wroth, 1110
Have here my trouthe, and many another oth!
Now spek to me, for it am I Cryseyde!"
But al for noght, yet myght he noght abrayde.¹

Therwith his pous² and paumes of his hondes
They gan to froote,³ and wete his temples
tweyne,

And to delyver him from bittre bondes,
She oft hym kyste; and, shortly for to seyne,
Hym to revoken she did al hire payne:
And, at the laste, he gan his breth to drawe,
And of his swough sone eftir that adawe;⁴

And gan bet⁵ mynde and reson to hym take;
But wonder soore he was abaiste, ywis! 1122
And with a syke, when he gan bet awake,
He seyde, "O mercy God! what thyng is
this?"

"Why do ye with youre-selven thus amys?"
Quod she Cryseyde; "is this a mannes game?
What, Troylus, wol ye do thus, for schame!"

¹ Awake. ² Pulse. ³ Rub. ⁴ Awake. ⁵ Better.

And therewithal hire arm overe hym she layde
 And al forgaf, and ofte tyme hym kyssede.
 He thonked hire, and to hire spak, and seyde
 As fil¹ to purpos, for his herte reste ; 1131
 And she to that answerde hym as hire leste,
 And with hire goodly wordes hym disporte
 She gan, and oft his sorwes to conforte.

Quod Pandarus, " For oght I kan aspien,
 This light nor I ne serven here of noght ;
 Light is noght goode for sike folkes yen ;²
 But, for the love of God, seyn³ ye ben broght
 In this goode plite, lat now no hevy thoght
 Ben hangyng in the hertes of yow tweye ;"
 And bar the candele to the chymeneye. 1141

Sone efter this, thogh it no nede were,
 When she swiche othes as hire list devyse
 Hadde of hym take, hire thoughte tho no fere,
 Ne cause ek non, to bidde hym thennes ryse :
 Yet lesse thyng than othes may suffise,
 In many a cas, for every wight, I gesse,
 That loveth wel, meneth but gentilnesse.

But, in efect, she wolde wyte⁴ anon,
 Of what man, and ek where, and also why,
 He jalous was, sen ther was cause non : 1151
 And ek the signe that he toke it by,
 She bad hym for to telle hire bisily ;
 Or elles, certeyn, she bar hym on honde,
 That this was don of malice hire to fonde.⁵

Withouten more, shortly for to seyne,

¹ Fell. ² Sick folk's eyes. ³ Since. ⁴ Know. ⁵ Try.

He most obeye unto his lady heste ;
 And for the lesse harm he moste feyn ;
 He seyde hire, when she was at swiche a feste,
 She myght on hym han loked at the leste ;
 Not ¹ I noght what, al deere ynogh a ryshe,²
 As he that nedes most a cause fyshe. 1162

And she answerde, "Swete, al were it so,
 What harm was that, seyn I non evele mene ?
 For, by that God that boght us bothe two,
 In al thyng is myn entente clene :
 Swiche argumentz ne ben noght worth a beene !
 Wol ye the childishe jalous contrefete ?
 Now were it worthy that ye were ybette."

Tho Troylus gan sorwfully to syke ; 1170
 Leste she be wroth, hym thought his herte
 deyede ;

And seyde, "Allas ! upon my sorwes syke,
 Have mercy, swete herte, myn Cryseyde !
 And if that in tho wordes that I seyde
 Be any wronge, I wol no more trespase ;
 Do what yow liste, I am al in youre grace."

And she answerde, "Of gylt misericord !
 That is to seyn, that I forgeve al this ;
 And everemore on this nyght yow recorde,⁸
 And beth wel war ye do namore amis." 1180
 "Nay, deere herte myn," quod he, "ywis !"
 "And now," quod she, "that I have don yow
 smerte.

Forgeve it me, myn owene swete herte !"

¹ Know I not. ² Rush. Cf. *Canterbury Tales*, ll. 13,335, 17,195.
 Witness.

This Troylus, with blisse of that supprised,
 Putte alle in Goddes sonde,¹ as he that mente
 Nothyng but wel, and sodeynly avysed,
 He hire in armes faste to hym hente :²
 And Pandarus, with a ful goode entente,
 Layde hym to slepe, and seyde, " If ye be wyse,
 Sweveneth³ noght now, lest more folk arise."

What myght or may the sely larke seye, 1191
 When that the sparhawk hath hym in hire foot?
 I kan namore, but of thise ilke tweye, —
 To whom this tale sucre be or soot,⁴ —
 Thogh that I tarie a yer, somtyme I mote,
 After myn auctor, tellen hire gladnesse,
 As wel as I have told hire hevynesse.

Cryseyde, which that felt hire thus ytake,
 As writen clerkes in hire bokes old,
 Right as an aspen leef she gan to quake, 1200
 When she hym felte hire in his armes folde ;
 And Troylus, al hool of cares colde,
 Can thonken tho the blisful goddes sevene.⁵
 Thus sondry peynes bryngen folk to hevene.

This Troylus in armes gan hire streyne,
 And seyde, " Swete, as evere mot I gon !
 Now be ye caught, now is ther but we tweyne,
 Now yeldeth yow, for other boot⁶ is non ! "
 To that Cryseyde answerde thus anon, 1209
 " Ne hadde I er now, my swete herte deere,
 Ben yolde⁷ ywis, I were now noght here ! "

¹ Appointment. ² Took. ³ Dream. ⁴ Sugar be or sweet. ⁵ The
 *ivinites of the seven spheres. ⁶ Cure. ⁷ Yielded.

O soth is seyde, that heled for to be
 As of a fevere, or other grete syknesse,
 Men moste drynke, as men may ofte se,
 Ful bittre drynke : and for to han gladnesse
 Men drynken of peynes, and grete distresse :
 I mene it here, as for this aventure,
 That thorgh a peyne hath fonden al his cure.

And now swetnesse semeth more swete,
 That bitternesse assayed was byforne ; 1220
 For oute of wo in blisse now they flete,¹
 Non swich they felten syn they were borne ;
 Now is this bet thanne bothe two be lorne !²
 For love of God ! take every womman hede,
 To werken thus, if it comyth to the nede.

Cryseyde, al quyt from every drede and teene,³
 As she that juste cause hadde hym to triste,⁴
 Made hym swich feste it joie was to seene,
 When she his trouthe and clene⁵ entente wiste
 And as aboute a tre, with many a twiste, 1230
 Bytrent⁶ and writhen is the soote⁷ woodbynde,
 Gan ech of hem in armes other wynde.

And as the new abaysed nyghtyngale,
 That stynteth first, when she bygynneth synge,
 When that she hereth any herdes tale,⁸
 Or in the hegges any wight sterynge ;⁹
 And, after, syker doth hire vois oute rynge ;
 Right so Cryseyde, when hire drede stente,
 Opned hire herte, and told hym hire entente.

¹ Float. ² Lost. ³ Trouble. ⁴ Trust. ⁵ Pure. ⁶ Twined.
⁷ Sweet. ⁸ Herdsman's voice. ⁹ Stirring.

And right as he that seth his deth yshapen,
 And deyen mot, in oght that he may gesse,
 And sodeynly rescous doth¹ hym escapen,
 And from his deth is brought in sykernesse ;
 For alle this world, in swich present gladnesse
 Was Troylus, and hath his lady swete. 1245
 With worse hap God lat us nevere mete !

Hire armes smale, hire streghte bak and
 softe,
 Her sydes longe, fleshly, smothe, and white,
 He gan to stroke ; and good thrifte bad ful ofte
 Hire snowissh throte, hire brestes rounde and
 lite :² 1250

Thus in this hevene he gan hym to delite,
 And therwithal a thousand tymes hire kyste,
 That what to don for joie unnethe³ he wyste.

Than seyde he thus : “ O Love ! O Charite !
 Thy moder ek, Cytharea⁴ the swete,
 After thy-self, next heried⁵ be she,
 Venus mene I, the welwilly⁶ planete !
 And next that, Ymeneus,⁷ I the grete ! 1258
 For nevere man was to yow, goddes, holde
 As I, which ye han broght from cares colde.

“ Benigne Love ! thou holy bond of thynges !
 Who so wol grace, and liste the noght honouren,
 Lo, his desir wol fle withouten wynges ;
 For noldestow⁸ of bounte hem socouren
 That serven best, and most alway labouren.

¹ Help causeth. ² Little. ³ Scarcely. ⁴ Venus, named from the
 island Cythera, off Laconia. ⁵ Praised. ⁶ Propitious. ⁷ Hymen
 Shouldst thou not.

Yet were al lost, that dar I wel seyn, certes,
But-if thy grace passed our desertes.

"And for thou me, that leeste koude disserve
Of hem that noumbred ben unto thy grace,
Hast holpen, there I likly was to sterve,¹ 1270
And me bistowed in so heigh a place,
That thilke boundes may no blisse pace,
I kan namore, but laude and reverence
Be to thy bounte and thyn excellence!"

And therwithalle Cryseyde anon he kyste,
Of which, certeyn, she felte no disese,²
And thus seyde he: "Now wolde God I wiste,
Myn herte swete, how I you myghte plesse!
What man," quod he, "was ever thus at ese
As I, in whiche the fairest and the beste, 1280
That evere I sey, deyneth hire herte reste?"

"Her may men sen that mercy passeth right;
The experience of that is felt in me,
That am unworthy to so swete a wight;
But, herte myn, of youre benignite,
So thynketh, thogh that I unworthy be,
Yet mote I nede amenden in som wise,
Right thorgh vertu of youre heighe servyse.

"And, for the love of God, my lady dere,
Syn God hath wrought me for I shal yow serve,
As thus I mene ye wol yet be my sterve,³ 1291
To do me lyve, if that yow list, or sterve,
So techeth me, how that I may disserve
Youre thonke, so that I thorgh mine ignoraunce,
Ne do nothyng that yow be displeaunce.

¹ Die (Ger. *sterben*). ² Discomfort. ³ Guide.

“ For certes, fresshe wommanliche wyf,
 This dar I seye, that trouthe and diligence,
 That shal ye fynden in me al my lyve,
 Ny ¹ wol not certein breken youre diffence,
 And if I do, presente or in absence, 1300
 For love of Gode, lat sle me with the dede,
 If that it like unto youre wommanhede.”

“ Ywis,” quod she, “ myn owen hertes liste,
 My grounde of ese, and al myn herte deere,
 Gramercy ! for on you is al my triste.
 But lat us fal away fro this matere,
 For it suffiseth, this that seyde is here ;
 And at o worde, withouten repentaunce,
 Welcome, my knyghte, my pees, my suffi-
 saunce ! ”

Of hire delite or joies oon the leeste 1310
 Were impossible to my wit to seye ;
 But juggeth ye that han ben at the feste
 In swich gladnesse, if that hem liste pleye :
 I kan namore but thus, this ilke tweye,
 That nyght, bitweyene drede and sykernesse,²
 Felten in love the grete worthynesse.

O blisful nyght, of hem so longe ysoughte,
 How blithe unto hem bothe two thow were !
 Why nade ³ I swich oon with my soule ybought ?
 Ye, or the leste joie that was there ? 1320
 Away ! thow foule daunger, and thow feere !
 And lat hem in this hevene blisse dwelle,
 Unat is so heigh, that al ne kan I telle.

¹ Ne I (nor I). ² Security. ³ Ne had (had not).

But sothe is that thogh I kan nat talen alle,
As kan myn auctour of his¹ excellence ;
And that have I seyde, and God to-forne shal,
In every thyng al holly his sentence ;
And if that I at loves reverence
Have any word in eched² for the beste,
Doth therwith al ryght as youre-selven leste.

For myne wordes here and every parte, 1331
I speke hem alle under correccion
Of you, that felynge han in loves arte,³
And putte it alle in youre discreccion
'Tencresce or maken dymynucion
Of my langage and that I yow beseche ;
But now to purpos of my rather⁴ speche.

This ilke two that ben in armes laft,
So loth to hem asonder gon it were,
That ech from other wenden ben biraft ; 1340
Or elles, lo ! this was hire moste feere,
That alle this thyng but nyce dremes were ;
For whiche ful oft ech of hem seyde, " O swete !
Clippe⁵ I yow thus, or elles I it meete."⁶

And, lord ! so he gan goodely on hire se,
That nevere his loke ne bleynte⁷ from hire
face ;

And seyde, " O deere herte ! may it be
That it be soth, that ye ben in this place ? "
" Ye, herte myne, God thanke I of his grace ! "

¹ That is, myn auctor's. ² Inserted (eked out). ³ Chaucer frequently insists that he is without experience of "loves arte." Cf. i 16 ; *Parlement of Foules*, l. 8, etc. ⁴ Former. ⁵ Embrace. ⁶ *Dream*. Blinked.

Quod tho Cryseyde, and therwithal hym kyste,
That where his spirit was, for joie he nyste.¹

This Troylus ful oft hire eyen two 1351
Gan for to kisse, and seyde, "O eyen clere!
It weren ye that wroghte me swich wo,
Ye humble nettes² of my lady deere!
Thogh ther be mercy writen in youre cheere,³
God woote the texte ful hard is, soth,⁴ to fynde
How koude ye wythouten bonde me bynde?"

Therwith he gan hire faste in armes take,
And wel an hondreth tymes gan he sike; 1360
Noght swiche sorwful sikes as men make
For wo, or elles when that folk ben sike;
But esy sikes, swiche as ben to like,⁵
That shewed his affeccion withinne;
Of swiche sykes koude he noght bilynne.⁶

Soon after this, they spak of sondry thynges
As fel to purpos of this aventure;
And pleyynge entrechangen hire rynges,
Of whiche I kan noght tellen no scripture;⁷
But wele I woot, a broche golde and asure,⁸
In whiche a ruby set was like an herte, 1371
Cryseyde hym gaf, and stak it on his sherte.

Lord! trow ye a coveytous, or a wreche,
That blameth love, and halt of it despite,
That of tho pens that he gan mokre and
theche,⁹
Was ever yet igeve hym swich delite,

¹ Knew not ² Snares. ³ Face. ⁴ Truly. ⁵ Please. ⁶ Cease
⁷ Motto. ⁸ Cf. *Canterbury Tales*, l. 15,420. ⁹ Hoard and hide.

As is in love, in o pointe in som plyte ?
 Nay, douteles ! for, al-so God me save,
 So parfite joie may no nygard ne have !

They wole seyn yis ! but, lorde ! so they lye,
 Tho besy wrechis ful of wo and drede, 1381
 They callen love a woodnes or folye !
 But it shal falle hem, as I shal yow rede ;
 They shalle forgon the whyte, and ek the rede ;¹
 And lyve in wo, ther God geve hem mys-
 chaunce !

And every love-re in his trouthe avaunce.

As wolde God ! tho wrechis that dispise
 Servyse of love hadde erys also longe
 As hadde Myda,² ful of coveityse ;
 And therto dronken hadde as hot and stronge
 As Cresus³ dide, for his affectes wronge ; 1391
 To techen hem, that they ben in the vyce,
 And lovers noght, althogh they hold hem nyce.⁴

Thise ilke two, of whom that I yowe seye,
 When that hire hertes wel assured were,
 Tho gonne they to speken and to pleye,
 And ek rehersen how, and whan, and where
 They knewe hem first, and every wo or fere
 That was passed ; but al swich hevynesse,
 I thonke it God, was torned into gladnesse.

And evermo, when that hem fel to speke
 Of any woo of swich a tyme agon, 1402
 Wyth kyssynge al that tale sholde breke,

¹ Silver and gold. ² Midas. See Ovid, *Metamorphoses* xi. 100. Cræsus, who had to drink molten gold. ⁴ Foolish.

And fallen in a new joie anon ;
 And diden al hire myght, syn they were oon,
 For to recoveren blisse, and ben at ese,
 And passed ¹ wo with joies countrepese
 Reson wol noght that I speke of slep,
 For it accordeth noght to my matere ;
 God woot ! they toke of that ful litel kep ! 1410
 But lest this nyght, that was to hem so deere,
 Ne shold in veyn escape in no manere,
 It was byset in joie and besynesse,
 Of al that souneth into ² gentillesse.

 But when the cok, comune astrologer, ³
 Gan on his breste to bete, and after, crowe ;
 And Lucifer, the dayes messenger,
 Gan for to ryse, and out hise bemys throwe ;
 And estward roos, to hym that koude it knowe,
Fortuna major, ⁴ than anon Cryseyde, 1420
 With herte soor, to Troylus thus seyde :

 “ Myn hertes lyf, my triste, al my plesaunce !
 That I was born, alas ! what me is woo
 That day of us moot make disseveraunce !
 For tyme it is to rise, and hennes go,
 Or elles I am lost for evermo.
 O nyght, alas ! why nyltou over us hove, ⁵
 As longe as when Alcmena lay by Jove ?

 “ O blake Nyght ! as folk in bokes rede,

¹ Surpassed. ² Tendeth to. ³ Cf. *Canterbury Tales*, l. 8466 ;
 and *Parlement of Foules*, l. 350. ⁴ *Fortuna major* is mentioned in
 the *Purgatorio*, xix. It is composed of eight stars in a certain
 form, and is, by an effort of the imagination, seen among the last
 stars of Aquarius and the first of Pisces. It is seen “in the orient
 before the dawn,” Dante says. ⁵ Hover.

That shapen art by God, this world to hyde
At certein tymes with thy derke wede,¹ 1431
That under that men myghte in reste abyde,
Wel oghten bestes pleyne, and folk the chide
That ther as day with labour wolde us breste,²
That thow thus fleest, and deynest us noght
reste.

“Thou dost, allas! to shortly thyn office,
Thow racle³ Nyght! ther God, maker of kynde,⁴
The for thyn haste and thin unkynde vice,
So fast ay to oure hemysperie bynde,
That nevere more under the grounde thow
wende ; 1440

For now for⁵ thow so hyst⁶ out of Troye,
Have I forgon thus hastily my joie.”

This Troylus, that with tho wordes felte,
As thoghte hym tho, for piteous distresse,
The blody teres from his herte melte,
As he that nevere yet swiche hevynesse
Assaied hadde out of so grete gladnesse,
Gan therwithal Cryseyde, his lady deere,
In armes streyne, and seyde in this manere

“O cruel Day! accusour of the joie 1450
That nyght and love han stole, and faste
ywrien!⁷

Acorsed be thy comynge into Troie,
For every boure⁸ hath oon of thy bryght eyen
Envymous Day! what liste the so to spyen?

¹ Clothing. ² Strain pas^t endurance. Rash. ⁴ Nature. ⁵ Be-
cause. ⁶ Hastest. ⁷ Covered. ⁸ Bower.

What hastow loste ? why sekestow this place ?
 Ther God thy light so quenche, for his grace !

“ Allas ! what bath thise lovers the agylte ?¹
 Dispitous² Day, thyn be the pyne of helle !
 For many a lover hastow slayn, and wilt ;
 Thy pourynge in wol nowher lat hem dwelle :
 What ? profrestow thy light here for to selle ?
 Go selle it hem that smale seles grave, 1463
 We wol the noght, us nedeth no day have.”

And ek the Sonne, Titan,³ gan he chyde,
 And seyde, “ O fool, wel may men the dispise :
 Thou hast the Dawnyng al nyght by thy side,
 And sooffriste hire so soone up fro the ryse,
 For to disese⁴ lovers in this wyse :
 What ! hold youre bed ther thow, and ek thy
 Morwe !

I bidde⁵ God so geve yow bothe sorwe !” 1470
 Therwith ful soor he sighte, and thus he
 seyde :

“ My lady right, and of my wele or wo
 The welle and roote, o goodely myn, Cryseyde,
 And shal I rise ? allas ! and shal I so ?
 Now fele I that myne herte mote atwo ;
 For how shold I my lyf an oure⁶ save,
 Syn that with yow is al the lyf I have ?

“ What shal I don ? For certes I not how,
 Ne when, allas ! I shal the tyme se, 1479
 That in this plit I may ben eft⁷ with yow ;

¹ Offended. ² Malicious. ³ Hyperion, one of the Titans, was the father of Helios, the Sun, and of Eos, or Aurora, the morning Discomfort. ⁴ Pray. ⁵ Hour. ⁷ Agair.

And of my lyf, God woot how that shal be,
 Syn that desir right now so biteth me,
 That I am ded anon but I retourne :
 How shal I longe, allas ! fro you sojourne !

“ But natheles, myn owene lady bright !
 Were it yet so that I wiste outerly,
 That I, youre humble servant and youre knyght.
 Were in youre herte yset so fermely
 As ye in myn, the which thyng trewely
 Me lever were than thise worldes ¹ tweyne,
 Yet shold I bet enduren al my peyne.” 1491

To that Cryseyde answerde right anon,
 And with a sik she seyde, “ O herte deere !
 The game, iwis, so ferfoorth now is gon,
 That first shal Phebus fallen fro his spere,
 And everich egle ben the dowves fere,²
 And every roche out of his place sterte,
 Er Troylus out of Cryseydes herte.

“ Ye ben so depe in-with myn herte grave,
 That thogh I wolde it torne out of my thoght,
 As wysely verray God ³ my soule save, 1501
 To dyen in the peyne,⁴ I koude noght :
 And, for the love of God that us hath w'oght,
 Lat in youre b'reyne non other fantasye
 So crepe, that it cause me to dye.

“ And that ye me wold han as fast in mynde
 As I have yow, that wold I yow beseche ;
 And if I wiste sothely that to fynde,

¹ Heaven and earth. ² Companion. ³ As truly true God. ⁴ *Peine forte et dure* (that is, by being pressed 'to death). Cf. i. 674; *Canterbury Tales*, l. 1133.

God myghte noght a poynte my joies eche.¹
 But, herte myn, withouten more speche, 1510
 Beth to me trewe, or elles were it routh,
 For I am thin, by God and by my trouthe!

“Beth glad forthy, and lyve in sykernesse, —
 Thus seyde I nevere er this, ne shal to mo,² —
 And if to yowe it were a grete gladnesse,
 To torne agein soon after that ye go,
 As fayn wolde I as ye that it were so,
 As wisly God myn herte brynge to reste!”
 And hym in armes took, and ofte kyste.

Agens his wille, sith it moot nedes be, 1520
 This Troylus up roos and faste hym cledde,³
 And in his armes took his lady fre
 An hondred tyme, and on his way hym spedde;
 And with swich wordes, as his herte bledde,
 He seyde: “Farwel, my deere herte swete!
 Ther God us graunte sownde and soone to
 mete!”

To which no worde for sorwe she answerde,
 So soore gan his partynge hire distreyne,
 And Troylus unto his paleys ferde,⁴
 As wo bygon as she was, soth to seyne; 1530
 So hard hym wronge of sharp desire the peyne
 For to ben eft ther he was in plesaunce,
 That it may nevere out of his remembraunce.

Retorned to his real⁵ paleys soone,
 He soft into his bed gan for to slynke
 To slepe longe, as he was wonte to doon,

¹ Eke (increase). ² More (*i. e.*, others). ³ Clad. ⁴ Went. ⁵ Royal

But al for noght ; he may wel ligge ¹ and wynke,
But slepe ne may ther in his herte synke,
Thynkyng how she, for whom desire hym
brende,

A thousande folde was worth more than he
wende. 1540

And in his thoght gan up and down to
wynde ²

Hire wordes alle, and every countenaunce,
And fermely impressen in his mynde
The leste poynte that to hym was plesaunce ;
And verrayliche of thilke remembraunce,
Desire al newe hym brende, and lust to breede
Gan more than erst, and yet took he non hede.

Cryseyde also, right in the same wise,
Of Troylus gan in hire herte shette
His worthinesse, his lust, his dedes wyse, 1550
His gentillesse, and how she with hym mette,
Thonkyng Love he so wel hire bisette ;
Desiryng efte to han hire herte deere
In swiche a plit, that she dorst make hym chere.

Pandare, amorwe, which that comyn was
Unto his nece and gan hire fayre grete,
Seyde, "Al this nyght so reyned it, allas !
'That al my drede is, that ye, nece swete,
Han litel leyser had to slepe and mete : ³ 1559
Al nyght," quod he, "hath reyn so do me wake,⁴
That som of us, I trowe, hire heddes ake."

And ner he com and seyde, "How stant it
nowe ?

¹ Lie. ² Turn Dream ⁴ Caused me to watch

This murye morwe, nece, how kan ye fare ? ”
 Cryseyde answerde, “ Nevre the bet for yowe ;
 Fox that ye ben, God geve youre herte care !
 God helpe me so, ye caused al this fare,
 Trow I,” quod she, “ for al youre wordes white ,
 O, who-so seth yow, knoweth yow ful lite ! ”

With that she gan hire face for to wrye¹
 With the shete, and wex for shame rede ; 1570
 And Pandarus gan under for to pryde,
 And seyde, “ Nece, if that I shal be dede,
 Have here a swerde, and smyteth of myn
 hede : ”

With that his armes al sodeynly he thryste
 Under hire nekke, and at the last hire kyste.

I passe al that whiche chargeth noght² to
 seye :

What ! God forgafe his deth, and she also
 Forgaf ; and with hire uncle gan to pleye,
 For other cause was ther non than so.
 But of this thyng right to the effect to go, 1580
 When tyme was, home til hire hous she wente,
 And Pandarus hath fully his entente.

Now torne we ageyn to Troylus,
 That resteles ful longe a bedde lay,
 And prively sente attter Pandarus,
 To hym to com in alle the hast he may ;
 He com anon, noght ones seyde he nay,
 And Troylus ful sobrely he grette,
And down upon his bedde syde hym sette.

¹ Hide. ² Is unimportant.

This Troylus, with al thaffeccioun 1590
Of friendes love that herte may devyse,
To Pandarus on knowes fil adoun ;
And er that he wold of the place aryse,
He gan hym thonken in his beste wyse ;
An hondred sithe he gan the tyme blisse
That he was borne, to brynge hym fro distresse.

And seyde, "O frend, of frendes the alder-
beste ¹

That evere was ! the sothe for to telle,
Thow haste in hevene ybrought my soule at
reste

Fro Flegitoun,² the fiery floode of helle ; 1600
That, though I myght a thousand tyme selle
Upon a day my lyf in thi servyse,
It mighte noght a moote ³ in that suffice.

"The Sonne, which that al the world may se,
Saugh nevere yet — my lyf that dar I leye —
So inly fayre, so goodly, as is she
Whos I am alle, and shal til that I dye ;
And that I thus am hires dar I saye,
That thonked be the heighe worthynesse
Of love, and ek thi kynde bysynesse ! 1610

"Thou hast now me no litel thyng ygeve,
For-why ⁴ to the obliged be for ay
My lyf ; and whi ? For thorch thyn help I lyve,
Or elles ded had I ben many a day : "
And with that worde down in his bed he lay,

¹ Best of all. ² Phlegethon, the flaming river of the iwer world.
See Virgil's *Æneid*, vi. 265, 55a. ³ Mite. ⁴ Wherefore

And Pandarus ful sobrelly hym herde,
Til alle was seyde, and then he hym answerde.

“ My dere frende ! if I have don for the,
In any cas, God woot it is me lief,¹
And am as glade as man may of it be ; 1620
God help me so ! but take now not agrefe,
That I shal seyne, — bewar of this meschefe,
That ther as thow now brought art in thi blisse
That thow thi-self ne cause it nat to mysse.

“ For, of Fortunes sharp adversite,
The worste kynde of infortune is this,
A man to han ben in prosperite,
And it remembren, when it passed is.
Thart² wyse ynogh ; forthi,³ do not amys,
Be noght to rakel,⁴ theigh⁵ thow sitte warme ;
For if thow be, certein it wol the harme. 1631

“ Thow art at ese, and hold the wel therinne
For, also seur as rede is ever fire,⁶
As grete a craft is kepe wele as wyne ;⁷
Bridle alway wel thi speche and thi desire,
For worldly joie halt noght but by a wyre ;
That preveth wel, it brest al day so ofte ;
Forthy nede is to werken with it softe.”

Quod Troylus, “ I hope, and God to-forne,
My deere freend, that I shal so me bere, 1640
That in my gilt ther shal nothyng be lorne,
Ny nyl noght⁸ rakel ben, to greven hire,
It nedeth noght this matere oft to-tere ;⁹

¹ Pleasing. ² Thou art. ³ Therefore. ⁴ Rash. ⁵ Though.
As sure as fire is ever red. ⁷ It is as great a craft to retain as to
get. ⁸ Nor I will not. ⁹ To tear to tatters — in discussion.

For wistestow myn herte wele, Pandare,
God woot of this thow woldest litel care."

Tho gan he telle hym of his glade nyght,
And wherof first his herte dred, and how ;
And seyde, " Frend, as I am trewe knyght,
And by that feith I shal to God and yow,
I hadde it nevere half so hote as now ; 1650
And ay the more that desire me biteth,
To love hire beste the more it me deliteth.

" I not my-self noght wysely what it is,
But now I feele a newe qualite,
Ye ! al another than I dide er this."
Pandare answerde and seyde thus, that " he
That ones may in hevenes blisse be,
He feleth othere wayes, dar I leye,
Than thylke tyme he first herde of it seye."

This is a worde for al : this Troylus 1660
Was nevere ful ¹ to speke of this matere,
And for to preysen unto Pandarus
The bounte of his righte lady deere,
And Pandarus to thank, and maken chere ;
'This tale ay was span-newe ² to begynne,
Til that the nyght departed hem a-twynne.

Soone after this, for that Fortune it wolde,
Ycomen was the blisful tyme swete,
That Troylus was warned that he sholde,
Ther he was erst, Cryseyde his lady mete :
For whiche he felt his herte in joie flete, ³ 1671

¹ Sated. ² As fresh as a shaving just cut (Ger. *span*, shaving ;
D. *E. span*, chip). ³ Float.

And feithfully gan alle the goddes herye;¹
 And let se now, if that he kan be merye.

And holden was the forme, and al the wyse
 Of hire comynge, and ek of his also,
 As it was erst, which nedeth noght devyse;
 But pleyndly, to theeffect right for to go,
 In joie and seurte, Pandarus hem two
 Abedde broghte, when that hem bothe leste;
 And thus they ben in quyete and in reste. 1680

Noght nedeth it to yow, syn they ben met,
 To ax at me, if that they blythe were,
 For if it erst was wel, tho was it bet²
 A thousand folde; this nedeth noght enquire;
 Ago³ was every sorwe and every feere,
 And both, ywis,⁴ they hadde, and so they wende,
 As muche joie as herte may comprehend

This nys no litel thyng of for to seye;
 This passith every wit for to devyse,
 For ech of hem gan otheres luste obeye; 1690
 Felicite, which that thise clerkes wyse
 Comenden so, ne may noght here suffise;
 This joie may noght wryten be with inke;
 This passeth al that herte may bithynke.

But cruel Day, so walaway the stounde!⁵
 Gan for taproche, as they by signes knewe;
 For which hem thoughte felten dethes wounde;
 So wo was hem, that changen gan hire hewe,
 And Day they gonnen to dispise al-newe,
 Callynge it "traytour," "envyous" and worse
 And bitterly the Dayes light they corse. 170.

¹ Praise. ² Better. ³ Gone. ⁴ Truly. ⁵ Thought ⁶ Hour.

Quod Troylus, " Allas ! now I am ware
 That Pirous,¹ and the swyfte stedes thre,
 Which that drawn forth the sonnes chare,
 Han gon som by-path in dispite of me ;
 That maketh it so sone day to be ;
 And for the Sonne hym hasteth thus to ryse,
 Ne shal I nevere don hire sacrifise."

But nedes Day depart² hem moste soone ;
 And when hire speche don was and hire chere,
 They twyrne² anon, as they were wonte to
 doone, 1711

And setten tyme of metyng eft yfere ;⁸
 And many nyght they wrought in this manere.
 And thus Fortune a tyme ledde in joie
 Cryseyde, and ek this kynges sone of Troie.

In suffisaunce, in blisse, and in syngynges,
 This Troylus gan alle his lyf to lede :
 He spendeth, jousteth, maketh festeynynges,⁴
 He geveth frely ofte, and chaungeth wede ;⁵
 He hold aboute hym alwey, out of drede, 1720
 A world of folk, as com hym wel of kynde,
 The fressheste and the beste he koude fynde.

That swich a vois was of hym and a nevene,⁶
 Thorghout the world, of honour and largesse,
 That it up rong unto the gate of hevene ;
 And as in love he was in swich gladnesse,
 That in his herte he demed, as I gesse,
 That ther nys lovere in this world at ese,
 So wel as he ; and thus gan love hym plese.

Pyroeis, one of the four steeds drawing the chariot of the Sun.
 Separate. ⁸ Again together. ⁴ Feasts (Fr. *festiner*, to make an
 extraordinary feast). ⁵ Garments. ⁶ Name.

The goodlyhed or beaute, which that Kynde¹
 In any other lady hadde yset, 1731
 Kan noght the mountaunce of a knotte unbynde
 Aboute his herte, of alle Cryseydes net :
 He was so narwe ymasked,² and yknet,
 That it undon on any maner syde,
 That nyl noght ben, for oght that may betide.

And by the hond ful oft he wolde take
 This Pandarus, and into gardyn lede,
 And swiche a feste, and swiche a proces³ make
 Hym of Cryseyde, and of hire wommanhede,
 And of hire beaute, that, withouten drede, 1741
 It was an hevene his wordes for to here,
 And thanne he wolde synge in this manere :

*Love, that of erth and se hath governaunce !
 Love, that his hestes hath in hevene hye !
 Love, that with an holsom alliaunce,
 Halt peples joyned, as hym liste hem gye !⁴
 Love, that knetteth law and compaignye,
 And couples doth⁵ in vertu for to dwelle !
 Bynd this acorde, that I have told and telle ! 1750
 That, that the world, with feith which that is
 stable,
 Dyverseth so, his stoundes⁶ concordynge,
 That elementz, that been so discordable,
 Holden a bond, perpetuely durynge ;
 That Phebus mot his rosy carte forth brynge,*

¹ Nature. ² Entangled (meshed). ³ Argument (a legal term).
 Guide. ⁴ Causeth. ⁵ Times.

*And that the mone hath lordschip overe the nyghte ;
Al this doth Love, ay heryed be his myght !*

*That, that the se, that gredy is to flowen,
Constreyneth to a certeyn ende so
Hise flodes, that so fiersly they ne growen 1760
To drenchen erth and alle for everemo ;
And if that Love oght lete his brydel go,
Al that now loveth asonder sholde lepe,
And lost were al that Love halt now to kepe.¹*

*Soo, wolde Gode, that auctour is of kynde,²
That with his bond, Love of his vertu liste
To cerclen hertes alle, and faste bynde,
That from his bonde no wighte the wey out wyste !
And hertes colde, hem wold I that he twiste, 1769
To make hem love, and that hem liste ay rewe
On hertes soore, and kepe hem that ben trewe.*

In alle the nedes for the townes werre
He was, and ay the firste in armes dighte ;
And certeynly, but-if that bokes erre,
Save Ector, most ydrede of any wight ;
And this encres of hardynesse and myght
Com hym of love, his ladyes thank to wynne,
That altered his spirit so withinne.

In tyme of trewes³ on haukyng wold he ryde,
Or elles hunte boore, beere, or lyoun ; 1780
The smale bestes leete he gon bysyde ;
And when that he com rydyng into toun,

¹ This passage on the Chain of Love is based on Boethius, *book ii., met. 8.* ² Nature. ³ Truce.

Ful oft his lady, from hire wyndow doun,
As fresh as faucon comen out of mewe,
Ful redy was hym goodly to salewe.

And most of love and vertu was his speche,
And in dispit hadde alle wrechednesse;
And, douteles, no nede was hym biseche
To honouren hem that hadde worthynesse,
And esen hem that weren in distresse, 179:
And glad was he if any wight wel feerde
That lover was, when he it wiste or herde.

For, soth to seyn, he lost held every wight,
But-if he were in Loves heigh servyse, —
I mene folk that oght it ben of right;
And overe alle this, so wele koude he devyse
Of sentement, and in so unkouth wyse
Al his array, that every lover thoghte
That al was wel, what-so he seyde or wroghte.

And, thogh that he be com of blode royal,
Hym liste of pride at no wight for to chace;
Beninge¹ he was to eche in general, 180:
For which he gat hym thanke in every place:
Thus wolde Love, — yheried be his grace! —
That pride and ire, envye, and avarice,
He gan to fle, and everych other vice.

Thow lady bryghte, the doghter to Dyon!²
Thy blynde and wynged sone, ek daun Cupide
Ye sustren nyne ek, that by Elycone

¹ Benign (Fr. *benin*, Lat. *benignus*). ² Dione, a Titan, the mother of Aphrodite, by Zeus; but she is here confounded with Cupid's mother, as is done by Ovid in the *Fasti*, ii. 460

In hil Parnaso,¹ listen for tabide ! 1810
 That ye thus fer han deynd me to gyde,
 I kan namore, but syn that ye wol wende,
 Ye heried² be for ay withouten ende !

Thorgh yow have I seyde fully in my songe
 Theffect and joie of Troylus servyse,
 Al be that ther was som disese among,³
 As to myn auctour listeth to devyse.
 My thridde book now ende I in this wyse,
 And Troylus. in luste and in quiete,
 Is with Cryseyde, his owen herte swete. 1820

FOURTH BOOK.

Proem.

But al to litel — welawey the while ! —
 Lasteth swich joy, ythonked be Fortune !
 That semeth trewest when she wol bigyle,
 And kan to fooles so hire songe entune,
 That she hem hente, and blente,⁴ — traitour
 comune !

And, when a wight is from hire whiel ythrowe,
 Than laugheth she, and maketh hym the mowe.⁵

From Troylus she gan hire brighte face
 Away to wrythe,⁶ and took of hym non hede,
 But cast hym clene oute of his lady grace, 10
 And on hire whiel she sette up Diomedes ;⁷

¹ Helicon is a continuation of Parnassus, both being resorts of the nine Muses. ² Praised. ³ Some discomfort mingled. ⁴ Taketh and blindeth. ⁵ Maketh mouths at him. ⁶ Turn. ⁷ Diomedes, King of Argos, next Achilles for valor among the Greeks

For whiche myn herte now right gynneth to
blede ;

And now my penne, allas, with which I wryte,
Quaketh for drede of that I most endite.

For how Cryseyde Troylus forsoke,
Or at the leeste, how that she was unkynde,
Moot hennesforth ben matere of my book,
As wryten folk thorgh which it is in mynde.
Allas, that they sholde evere cause fynde
To speke hire harme ! and if they on hire lye,
Ywis hemself shold han the vylenye ! 21

O ye Herynes !¹ nyghtes doghtren thre,
That endeles compleynen evere in pyne,
Megera, Alecte, and ek Thesiphone !
Thow cruel Mars ek, fader of Quyryne !²
This ilke ferthe book me helpeth fyne,³
So that the los of lyf, and love, yfere,⁴
Of Troylus be fully shewed here.

The Story.

Lyggynge⁵ in oost, as I have seyde or this,
The Grekes stronge aboute Troye toun, 30
Byfel, that when that Phebus shynynge is
Upon the breste of Herculis Leoun,⁶
That Ector, with ful many a bolde baroun,
Cast on a day with Grekes for to fighte,
As he was wonte, to greve hem what he myghte
Not⁷ I how longe or short it was bitwene

¹ Erinyes, Furies, Tisiphone, Alecto, and Megæra. ² Romulus
See *Fasti*, book ii., etc. ³ Help me finish. ⁴ Together. ⁵ Lying
The constellation Leo. ⁷ Know not.

This purpos and that day they fighten mente ;
 But, on a day, wele armed bryght and shene,
 Ector and many a worthi wight out wente
 With spere in honde, and bigge bowes bente,
 And in the berde,¹ withouten lenger lette, 41
 Hire fomen in the felde anon hem mette,

The longe day, with speres sharpe ygrounde,
 With arwes, dartes, swerdes, maces felle,
 They fighten, and oryngen hors and man to
 grounde,

And with hire axes out the braynes quelle ;²
 But in the last stoure,³ soth for to telle,
 The folk of Troie hem-selven so mysleden,
 That, with the wors, at nyght homward they
 fledden.

At whiche day was taken Antenor, 50
 Maugre⁴ Polidamas, or Monesteo,
 Xantippe, Sarpedon, Polynestor,
 Polite, or ek the Trojan daun Rupheo,
 And other lesse folk, as Phebuseo ;
 So that for harme that day the folk of Troie
 Dreden to lese a grete part of hire joye.

Of Priamus was geve, at Grek requeste,
 A tyme of trewes ; and tho they gonnen trete
 Hire prisoners to chaungen, most and leste,
 And, for the surplus, gevene sommes grete. 60
 This thyng anon was kouth in every strete,
 Both in thessege⁵ and toun and every where,
 And with the firste it come to Calkas ere.

¹ Face to face. ² Kill. ³ Comt at. ⁴ Despite. ⁵ The siege.

Whan Calkas knew this tretis sholde holde,
 In consistorie amonge the Grekes soone
 He gan in thrynge¹ forth with lordes olde,
 And set hym there as he was wonte to done ;
 And with a chaunged face hem bad a boone,
 For love of God, and don that reverence,
 To stynte noyse, and geve hym audience. 70

Than seyde he thus, "Lo, lordes myn, Ich was
 A Trojan, as it is knowen out of drede ;
 And, if that yow remembre, I am Calkas,
 That alderfirste gaf confort to youre nede,
 And tolde wel how that ye sholde spede ;
 For, dredeles, thorgh yow shal, in a stounde,²
 Ben Troie brente, and betten doun to grounde.

"And in what forme, or in what maner wyse
 This town to shende,³ and al youre luste ta-
 cheve,⁴

Ye han, or this, wel herde it me devyse : 80
 This knowe ye, my lordes, as I leve ;
 And, for the Grekes weren me so leve,
 I com my-self, in my proper persone,
 To teche in this how yow was best to done,

"Havyng unto my tresour, ne my rente,
 Right no regard in respecte of your ese ;
 Thus al my goode I loste, and to yow wente,
 Wenynge in this yow lordes for to plesse ;
 But al that los ne doth me no disese, —
 I vouchesauf, as wysly have I joye, 90
 For yow to leese al that I have in Troye, —

¹ Press, throng. ² Moment. ³ Ruin. ⁴ To achieve.

"Save of a doghter that I lefte, allas !
 Slepynge at home, when out of Troie I sterte.
 O sterne, O cruel fader, that I was !
 How myght I have in that so harde an herte ?
 Allas ! I ne hadde broght here in hire sherte !
 For sorwe of which I wol noght lyve to morwe
 But-if ye lordes rew upon my sorwe.

"For by that cause I say¹ no tyme or now
 Hire to delivere, I holden have my pees ; 100
 But now or nevere, if it like yowe,
 I may hire have, right soone douteles.
 O helpe and grace ! amonge al this prees,
 Reweth on this olde caytif² in distresse,
 Syn I thorgh yow have al this hevynesse !

"Ye have now caught, and fetered in prisoun,
 Trojans ynowe, and if youre willes be,
 My childe with oon may han redempcioun.
 Now, for the love of God, and of bounte !
 Oon of so fele,³ allas, so gif hym me ! 110
 What nede were it this preyere for to werne,⁴
 Syn ye shul both han folk and toun as yerne ?⁵

"On peril of my lif, I shal nat lye,
 Apollo hath me told it feithfully,
 I have ek founde by astronomye,
 By sort,⁶ and by augurye ek trewly,
 And dar wel seye, the tyme is faste by,
 That fir and flaumbe on al the toun shal sprede,
 And thus shal Troie torne to asshen dede.

"For certeyn, Phebus and Neptunus bothe,

¹ Saw. ² Wretch. ³ Many. ⁴ Refuse. ⁵ Quickly. ⁶ Lot.

That makeden the walles of the toun, 121
 Ben with the folk of Troie alwey so wrothe,
 That they wol brynge it to confusioun,
 Right in despit of kyng Lameadoun,¹
 Bycause he nolde payen hem here hire,
 The town of Troie shal ben set on fyre."

Tellynge his tale alway, this olde greye,²
 Humble in his speche and in his lokynge eke,
 The salte teres from his eyen tweye,
 Ful faste ronnen down by eyther cheeke ; 130
 So longe he gan of socoure hem byseke,
 That, for to hele hym of his sorwes soore,
 They gave hym Antenor withouten more.³

But who was glad ynough but Calkas tho?
 And of this thyng ful soone his nedes leyde
 On hem that sholden for the tretis go,
 And hem for Antenor ful ofte preyde,
 To brynge hom kynge Thoas⁴ and Cryseyde
 And, whan Priamus his save-garde sente,
 Thembassadours to Troie streighte wente. 140

The cause ytolde of hire comynge, the olde
 Priam the kynge, ful soone in general,
 Let here-upon his parlement to holde,
 Of which theffect rehercen yow I shal.
 Thembassatours ben answerde for fynal,
 Theschaunge of prisoners, and alle this nede
 Hem lyketh wele, and forth in they procede.

This Troylus was present in the place,

¹ Laomedon, King of Troy, employed Phebus Apollo and Neptun^e
 to build the city's walls, and then refused the promised wages. ² Gray
 man ³ More ado. ⁴ Son of Andræmon and Gorge. *Iliad*, ii.

Whan axed was for Antenor Cryseyde ;
 For which ful soone chaungen gan his face, 150
 As he that with tho wordes wel neigh deyde ;
 But, natheles, he no worde to hit seyde ;
 List men sholde his affeccioun espye,
 With mannes ¹ herte he gan hys sorwes drye,
 And, ful of angwish and of grisiey drede,
 Abod ² what lordes wolde unto it seye ;
 And if they wolde graunte, as God forbede !
 Theschaunge of hir, than thoght he thynges
 tweye : 158

First, how to save hire honour ; and what weye
 He myghte best theschaunge of hire withstonde.
 Ful faste he caste how al thys myghte stonde.

Love hym made alle prest ³ to don hyre bide, ⁴
 Or rather dyen than she sholde go ;
 But reson seyde hym, on that other syde,
 "Withouten assente of hire ne do not so,
 Leste for thi werke she wolde be thi fo ;
 And seyde, that thorgh thy medlynge is yblowe ⁵
 Youre eyther love, ther it was erst unknowe."

For which he gan deliberen for the beste,
 That thogh the lordes wolde that she wente,
 He wolde lat hem graunte what hem liste, 171
 And telle his lady firste what that they mente ;
 And whan that she hadde seyde hym hire en-
 tente,
 Therefter wolde he werken also blyve, ⁶
 Theigh ⁷ al the world ageyn it wolde stryve.

¹ Manly. ² Awaited. ³ Ready (O. Fr. *prest*). ⁴ Cause her to
 bide. ⁵ Blown abroad. ⁶ Quickly. ⁷ Though

Ector, which that wel the Grekes herde,
 For Antenor how they wolde han Cryseyde,
 Gan it withstonde, and sobrelly answerde :
 "Sires, she nys no prisoner," he seyde, 179
 "I not ¹ on yow who that this charge layde ;
 But, on my part, ye may eft-sones hem telle,
 We usen here no wommen for to selle."

The noyse of peple up stirte thanne at ones,
 As breme ² as blase of straw yset on fyre,
 For Infortune it wolde for the nones,
 They sholden hire confusion desire :

"Ector," quod they, "what gost may yow en-
 spire

This womman thus to shilde, and don us lese
 Daun Antenor? — a wrong wey now ye
 chese, ³ —

"That is so wis, and eke so bolde baroun ;
 And we han nede of folk, as men may se, 191
 He is ek on ⁴ the grettest of this toun ;

O Ector, lat tho fantasyes be !

O kynge Priam," quod they, "thus siggen ⁵ we,
 That al oure vois is to forgon Cryseyde."

And to delyveren Antenor they preyde.

O Juvenal, ⁶ lorde, trewe is thy sentence,
 That litel witen folk what is to yerne ; ⁷
 That they ne fynde in hire desire offence,
 For cloude of errour ne lat hem discernen 200
 What best is ; and lo ! here ensauple as
 yerne : ⁸

¹ Know not. ² Furiously. ³ Choose. ⁴ One of. ⁵ Say. ⁶ See
 Satire x. ⁷ Desire. ⁸ Promptly.

This folk desiren now delyveraunce
 Of Antenor,¹ that brought hem to myschaunce ;
 For he was after traitour to the toun
 Of Troie ; alas ! they quite hym oute to rathe !²
 O nyce world, lo ! thy discrecioun !
 Cryseyde, whiche that nevere dide hem scathe,
 Shal now no longer in hire blisse bathe,
 But Antenor, he shal com hom to toun,
 And she shal out, — thus seyde here and
 houn.³ 210

For whiche delibered was by parlemente,
 For Antenor to yelden out Cryseyde,
 And it pronounced by the president,
 Al-theigh that Ector “ nay ” ful ofte preyde.
 And, finally, what wight that it withseyde,
 It was for noght, — it moste ben, and sholde,
 For substaunce of the parlement it wolde.

Departed out of parlement echone,
 This Troylus, withouten wordes mo,
 Unto his chaumbre spedde hym faste allone,
 But if it were a man of his or two, 221
 The whiche he bad out faste for to go,
 Bycause he wolde slepen, as he seyde ;
 And hastely upon his bed hym layde.

And as in wynter leves ben byraft,
 Eche efter other, til the tre be bare,
 So that ther nys but bark and braunche ylaft,
 Lith Troylus, byraft of eche welfare,

¹ Cf. *De the of Blaunche*, l. 1119. ² Sec. 2. ³ Hare and hound
 that is, the people. ⁴ The body.

Ybounden in the blake barke of care,
 Disposed wode ¹ out of his wit to brayde,² 230
 So soore hym sat the chaungynge of Cryseyde.

He ryste hym up, and every dore he shette,
 And wyndow eke, and tho this sorwful man
 Upon his beddes syde adown hym sette,
 Ful like a dede ymage, pale and wan ;
 And in his breste the heped wo bygan
 Out brast, and he to werken in this wyse,
 In his wodenesse, as I shal yow devyse.

Right as the wilde bole bigynneth sprynge
 Now here, now ther, ydarted to the herte, 240
 And of his deth roreth in compleynyng ;
 Right so gan he aboute the chaumbre sterte,
 Smytyng his brest ay with his fistes smerte ;
 His hed to the walle, his body to the grounde,
 Ful ofte he swapte,³ hymselfen to confounde.

Hys eyen two, for pite of his herte,
 Out stremeden as swyfte welles ⁴ tweye ;
 The heighe sobbes of his sorwes smerte
 His spech hym refte, unnethes myghte he seye,
 "O Deth, allas ! why nyltow do me deye ?" 250
 Acorsed be that day whiche that Nature
 Shope me to ben a lyves creature !"

But efter, when the furie and al the rage,
 Which that his herte twiste, and faste threste,
 By lengthe of tyme somewhat gan aswage,
 Upon his bedde he layde hym down to reste .
 But tho bigan his teres more oute breste,

¹ Mad. ² Start. ³ Swooped, threw. ⁴ Springs.

That wonder is the body may suffice
To half this wo, which that I yow devyse.

Than seyde he thus: "Fortune, allas the
while! 260

What have I don? what have I thus agilt?¹
How myghtestow for routhe me bygyle?
Is ther no grace? and shal I thus be spilted?²
Shal thus Cryseyde away, for that thow wilt?
Allas! how maistow in thyn herte fynde
To ben to me thus cruel and unkynde?

"Have I the noght honoured al my lyve,
As thow wel woost, above the goddes alle?
Why wiltow me fro joie thus depryve?
O Troylus! what may men the now calle, 270
But wrech of wrechis, out of honour falle
Into miserie? in whiche I wol biwaille
Cryseyde, allas! til that the breth me faille.

"Allas, Fortune! if that my life in joie
Displesed hadde unto thy foule envye,
Whi ne haddestow my fader, kyng of Troye,
Byraft the life, or don my bretheren dye,
Or slayn my-self, that thus compleyne and crye:
I combre world, that may of nothing serve,
But evere dye, and nevere fully sterve.³ 280

"If that Cryseyde allone were me laft,
Noght roght I whidere thow woldest me sterve,
And hire, allas! than hastow me biraft:
But everemore, lo! this is thy manere,
To reve⁴ a wyght that moost is to hym deere,

¹ Offended ² Ruined. ³ Die. ⁴ Bereave.

To preve in that thi gerful ¹ violence :
Thus am I lost, ther helpeth no defence.

“O verrey Lord, O Love, O God, allas !
That knowest best myn herte and alle my
thoght,

What shal my sorwful lyf don in this cas, 29c
If I forgo that I so deere have boght ?
Syn ye Cryseyde and me han fully broght
Into your grace, and both oure hertes seled,
How may ye suffre, allas ! it be repeled ?

“What I may don, I shal, whil I may dure
On lyve, in torment and in cruel peyne,
This infortune, or this disaventure,
Allone as I was borne, ywys ² compleyne ;
Ne nevere wol I sen it shyne or reyne,
But ende I wol, as Edippe, ³ in derkenesse 30c
My sorwful lyf, and dyen in distresse.

“O verrey goost, that errest to and fro !
Whi nyltow flen out of the wofulleste
Body that evere myght on grounde go ?
O soule ! lurkyng in this wo unneste ! ⁴
Fle forth out myn herte, and lat it breste,
And folwe alwey Cryseyde, thi lady deere !
Thi righte place is now no longer here.

“O woful eyen two ! syn youre disporte
Was al to sen Cryseydes eyen brighte, 31c
What shal ye don, but, for my disconforte,
Storden for noght, and wepen out your sighte.

¹ Capricious. Cf. *Canterbury Tales*, l. 1536. ² Truly. ³ *Œdipus*
who tore out his own eyes. ⁴ Unknown.

Syn she is queynte,¹ that wont was yow to lighte ?
In veyne, fro this forth, have I eyen tweye
Yformed, syn youre vertu² is aweye.

"O my Cryseyde ! O lady soverayne
Of this woful soule that thus cryeth !
Who shal now geven confort to thi peyne ?
Allas ! no wight ; but, when myn herte dyeth,
My spirit, which that so unto yow hyeth, 320
Receyve in gre,³ for that shal ay yow serve ;
Forthy no fors is, thogh the body sterve.

"O ye lovers ! that heighe upon the whiel
Ben set of Fortune in goode aventure,
God lene⁴ that ye fynde ay love of stiel,⁵
And longe mote youre lyf in joie endure !
But, whan ye comen by my sepulture,
Remembreth that youre felowe resteth there ;
For I loved ek, though I unworthy were.

"O olde, unholsom, and myslyved man ! 330
Calkas I mene, alas ! what aylede the
To ben a Greke, syn thow ert born Trojan ?
O Calkas ! which that wolt my bane be,
In cursed tyme wast thow borne for me !
As wolde blisful Jove, for his joie,
That I the hadde wher I wold in Troie !"

A thousand sikes⁶ hottere than the glede,⁷
Out of his breste, ech efter othere, wente,
Medled⁸ with pleyntes new, his wo to fede,
For which his woful teris nevere stente ; 340

¹ Quenched. ² Power. ³ Favor. Grant ⁵ (True as) steel
Sighs ⁷ Live coals. ⁸ Mingled

And shortly so hise peynes hym to-rente,
 And wax so maat,¹ that joie or penaunce
 He feleth non, but lith forth in a traunce.

Pandare, which that in the parlement
 Hadde herde what every lord and burges seyde
 And how ful graunted was, by oon assente,
 For Antenor to yelden so Cryseyde,
 Gan wel neigh woode out of his wit to breyde
 So that for wo he nyste² what he mente
 But, in a rees,³ to Troylus he wente.

A certeyn knyght, that for the tyme kepte
 The chaumbre dore, undi' it hym anon ;
 And Pandare, that ful te' lrelyche wepte,
 Into the derke chaumbre, as stille as stone,
 Towarde the bedde gan softly to gone,
 So confus, that he nyste what to seye ;
 For verray wo, his wit was neigh awaye.

And with his chere and lokynge al to-torn,
 For sorwe of this, and with his armes folden,
 He stode this woful Troylus biforn, 360
 And on his pitous face he gan biholden ;
 But, Lord ! so ofte gan his herte colden !
 Seynge his frend in wo, whos hevynesse
 His herte slough, as thoghte him, for distresse

This woful wight, this Troylus, that felte
 His frend Pandare ycomen him to se,
 Gan as the snow agein the sonne melte ;
 For which this sorwful Pandare, of pite,
 Gan for to wepe as tendrelich as he ;

¹ Dejected. ² Knew not. ³ Race

And specheles thus ben thise ilke tweye, 370
That neither myght a worde for sorwe seye.

But, at the laste, this woful Troylus,
Neigh ded for smerte, gan bresten out to re,
And with a sorwful noise he seyde thus,
Amang hise sobbes and his sikes sore :
"Lo ! Pandare, I am ded withouten more !
Hastow nat herd at parlement," he seyde,
"For Antenor how loste is my Cryseyde ?"

This Pandarus, ful ded and pale of hewe,
Ful pitously answerde, and seyde, "Yis ! 380
As wisly were it fals as it is trewe,
That I have herde, and woot al how it is !
O mercy God ! who wold have trowed this ?
Who wold have wende that in so litel a throwe,
Fortune oure joye wold have overthrowe ?

"For in this worlde there is no creature,
Als to my dome, that evere saugh ruyne
Straunger than this, thorgh cas or aventure ;
But who may al eschue or al devyne ?
Swich is this world ! forthi I thus defyne : 390
Ne truste no wight to fynden in Fortune
Ay properte : hir giftes ben comune !

"But tel me this, why thow ert now so mad
To sorwen thus ? why listow in this wyse,
Syn thi desire al holye hastow had,
So that by right it oght ynogh suffise ?
But I that nevere felt in my servyse
A frendly chere or lokynge of an eye,
Lat me thus wepe and waylen til I dye.

“And over al this, as thow wel woost thi-
selve, 400

This toun is ful of ladis al aboute,
And to my doom, fayrer than swiche twelve
As evere she was, shal I fynden in som route,
Ye! oon or two, withouten any doute.
Forthi be glade, myn owen deere brother!
If she be lost, we shal recovere another.

“What! God forbede alwey that ech ples
aunce

In o thyng were, and in noon other wight!
If on kan synge, another can wel daunce;
If this be goodly, she is glad and light; 410
And this is fair, and that kan goode aright;
Ech for his vertu holden is for deere,
Both heroner, and faucoun for ryvere.

“And ek as writ Zanzis,¹ that was ful wis,
‘The newe love oute chaceth oft the olde:
And upon newe cas lith a newe avys;’
Thynke ek thi lif to saven ertow holden,
Swich fire by processe shal of kynde colden;²
For, syn it is but casuel plesaunce, 419
Som cas shal putte it oute of remembraunce.

“For also seur as day cometh after nyght,
The newe love, labour or other wo,
Or elles selde seyng of a wight,
Don olde affeccions alte over go;
And for thi part, thow shal have oon of two,
Tabrigge with thi bittre peynes smerte;
Absens of hire shal dryve hire out of herte.”

¹ Cf. *Canterbury Tales*, l. 9090. ² Of nature grow cold.

These wordes seyde he for the noones alle
 To helpe his frend, lest he for sorwe dyede,
 For douteles to don his wo to falle, 430
 He roghte noght what unthrift that he seyde :
 But Troylus, that neigh for sorw dyede,
 Took litel hede of alle that evere he mente ;
 Oon ere it herde, at tother out it wente.

But, atte last, answerde, and seyde, " Frende,
 This lechecraft,¹ or heled thus to be,
 Were wel sittynge² if that I were a fend,
 To traysen³ a wight that trewe is unto me ;
 I preye God let this counseyle never ythe,⁴
 But do me rather sterve anon right here, 440
 Er I thus do as thow me woldest leere !

" She that I serve, ywis, what so thow seye,
 To whom myn herte enhabit⁵ is by right,
 Shal han me holly hires, til that I deye ;
 For, Pandarus, syn I have trowthe hire hight,
 I wol nat ben untrewre for no wight,
 But, as hire man, I wole ay lyve and sterve,
 And nevere noon other creature serve.

" And ther thow seist thow shalt as faire fynde
 As she, — lat be ! make no comparisoun 450
 To creature yformed here by Kynde !
 O leve Pandare ! in conclusyoun,
 I wol not ben of thyn opinyoun,
 Touchyng al this ; for whiche I t'he beseche,
 So holde thi pees ; thow slest me with thi
 speche !

Medical practice. ² Fitting. ³ Betray. ⁴ Thrive. ⁵ Bound.

“Thow biddest me I sholde love another
 Alle freshly newe, and lat Cryseyde go ;
 It lith nat in my power, leeve brother !
 And thogh I myghte, I wolde not do so ;
 But kanstow pleyen raket, to and fro, — 460
 ‘Nettle in, dokke out,’¹ — now this, now that,
 Pandare ?

Now foule falle hire for thi wo and care !

“Thow farest ek by me, thow Pandarus !
 As he that whan a wight is wo bygon,
 He cometh to hym apaas, and seith right
 thus :

‘Thynke nat on smerte, and thow shalt fele
 none !’

Thow moost me ferst transmuwen² in a stoon,
 And reve me my passiounes alle,
 Er thow so lightly do my wo to falle !

“The deth may wel out of my brest departe
 The lyf, so longe may this sorw myne ;³ 471
 But fro my soule shal Cryseydes darte
 Out nevermo, but down with Proserpyne,
 Whan I am dede, I wol go wone⁴ in pyne ;
 And ther I wol eternely compleyne
 My wo, and how that twynned⁵ be we tweyne.

“Thow hast here made an argument, for fyne,⁶
 How that it sholde lasse peyne be
 Cryseyde to forgon, for she was myne,
 And lyved in ese and in felicite ; 48c

¹ Familiar, dock being used to cure nettle rash. ² Transmute
³ Undermine. ⁴ Dwell. ⁵ Separated. ⁶ To conclude.

Why gabbestow, that seydest unto me,
 That hym is wors that is fro wel ythrowe,
 Than he hadde erst non of that wele yknowe?

“But tel me now, syn that the thynketh so
 lyght

’To chaungen so in love ay to and fro,
 Why hastow nat doon bysily thy myghte
 To chaungen hire that doth the al thi wo?
 Why nyltow lete hire fro thin herte go?
 Why nyltow love another lady swete,
 That may thin herte setten in quiete? 490

“If thow hast hadde in love ay yet mes-
 chaunce,

And kanst it noght oute of thyne herte dryve,
 I that lyvede in luste and in plesaunce
 With hire, as mucche as creature on lyve,
 How shold I that forgete, and that so blyve?
 O wher hastow ben so longe hyde in muwe,
 That kanst so wel and formeliche arguwe?

“Nay! God woot, noght worthi is al thi rede!
 For which, for what that evere may befalle,
 Withouten wordes mo, I wol be dede: 500
 O Deth! that endere ert of sorwes alle,
 Com now, syn I so oft efter the calle!
 For sely is that deth, soth for so seyne,
 That, oft ycleped, cometh and endeth peyne.

“Wel wote I, whil my lif was in quiete,
 Er thow me slewe I wolde have geven hire;¹
 But now thi comynge is to me so swete,

¹ I would have given you hire not to slay me.

That in this world I no thinge so desire :
 O Deth, syn with this sorw I am a-fire,
 Thow other do me anon in teres drenche, 510
 Or with thy colde strooke myn heerte quenche !

“Syn that thow slest so fele¹ in sondry wyse
 Agens hire wil, unpreyed day and nyghte,
 Do me at my requeste this servyse !
 Delivere now the world, so dostow right,
 Of me, that am the wofulleste wight
 That evere was ; for tyme is that I sterve,
 Syn in this world of right noght may I serve.”

This Troylus in teres gan distille,
 As licour out of alembic, ful faste ; 520
 And Pandarus gan hold his tonge stille,
 And to the grounde his eyen doun he caste ;
 But natheles, thus thoght he at the laste,
 “What? *parde* ! rather than my felawe deye
 Yet shal I somewhat more unto hym seye.”

And seyde, “Frende, syn thow haste swich
 distresse,
 And syn the list myn argumentz to blame,
 Why nylt thy-selven helpen don redresse,
 And with thi manhod letten al this grame ?²
 Go ravyshe³ hire, — ne kanstow noght for
 shame ? — 530

And other let hire out of towne fare,
 Or hold hire stille, and leve thi nyce fare.

“Artow in Troye, and hast non hardimente
 To tak a womman which that loveth the,

¹ Many. ² Hinder all this sorrow. ³ Abduct, take by force.

And wold hireselven ben of thyn assente ?
 Now is nat this a nyce vanyte ?
 Rise up anon, and lat this wepyng be !
 And right thow ert a man, for in this houre
 I wol ben dede, or she shal bleven oure."¹

To this answerde hym Troylus ful softe, 540
 And seyde, "*Parde*, leve brother deere,
 Al this have I myself yet thoght ful ofte,
 And more thyng than thow devydest here ;
 But why this thyng is laft, thow shalt wel here,
 And when thow me hast geven an audience,
 Therefter maistow telle alle thi sentence."²

"First, syn thow woost this town hath alle
 this werre

For ravysshynge of wommen so by myght,
 It sholde noght be suffred me to erre,
 As it stant now, ne don so grete unright ; 550
 I sholde han also blame of every wyght,
 My fadres graunte³ if that I so withstode,
 Syn she is chaunged for the tounes goode.

"I have ek thoght, so it were hire assente,
 To axe hire at my fader of his grace ;
 Than thynke I, thys were hire acusemente,
 Syn wel I woot I may hire noght purchase ;⁴
 For syn my fader, in so heigh a place
 As parlement, hath hire eschaunge enseled,
 He nyl for me his lettre be repeled. 560

"Yet drede I most hire herte to pertorbe
 With violence, if I do swich a game ;

¹ Remain ours. ² Opinion. ³ Concession. ⁴ Successfully seek

For if I wolde it openly distorbe,
 It mooste be disclaundre to hire name,
 And me were levere ded than hire defame;
 As nolde God, but if I sholde have
 Hire honour levere than my lif to save.

“ Thus am I lost, for oght that I kan se,
 For certein is, syn that I am hire knyght,
 I most hire honour levere han than me 570
 In every cas, as lovers aught of righte;
 Thus am I in desire and reson twyght:¹
 Desire, for to distorben hire, me redeth,²
 And reson nyl not, so myn herte dredeth.”

Thus wepynge, that he koude nevere cesse,
 He seyde, “ Allas, how shal I, wreche, iare?
 For wel fele I alway my love encresce,
 And hope is lasse and lasse alway, Pandare!
 Encresen ek the causes of my care,
 So waylawey! why nyl myn herte hreste?³
 For as in love ther is but litel rest.” 581

Pandare answerde, “ Frend! thou mayst for
 me

Don as the lest; but hadde Ich it so hoote,
 And thyn estate, she sholde go with me!
 Thogh al this toun cryed on this thyng by
 note,

I noide sette at al that noyse a grote;
 For when men han wel cryed, than wol they
 rounne,⁴

Ek wonder last but nine nyght nevere in toun.

¹ Twitched. ² Adviseth. ³ Will not my heart burst. ⁴ Whisper

"Devyne¹ nat in reson ay so depe,
 Ne curtaisly, but helpe thi-self anon ; 590
 Bet is that othere than thi-selven wepe ;
 And namely, syn ye two ben al oone,
 Rise up, for by myn hed she shal not gon !
 And rather be in blame a lite yfounde,
 Than sterve here as a gnat withouten wounde.

"It is no shame unto yow, ne no vyce,
 Hire to withholden, that ye loveth most ;
 Paraunter she myght holden the for nyce,²
 To laten hire go thus unto the Grekes oost ;
 Thynk ek, Fortune, as wel thi-selven wooste,
 Helpeth hardy man unto his emprise, 601
 And weyveth³ wreches for hire cowardyse.

"And, thogh thi lady wolde alite⁴ hire greve,
 Thow shalt thi-self thi pees here-efter make ;
 But, as for me, certeine, I kan not leve⁵
 That she wolde it as now for evel take.
 Why sholde thanne, of-fered,⁶ thyn herte quake ?
 Thynk ek how Paris hath, that is thi brother,
 A love ; and why shaltowe not have another ?

"And, Troylus, o thyng I dar the swere, 610
 That if Cryseyde, which that is thi lief,
 Now loveth the as wel as thow dost hire,
 God help me so ! she nyl not take a-gryefe,
 Theigh thow do boote⁷ anon in this meschief ;
 And if she wilneth fro the for to passe,
 Thanne is she fals, so love hire wel the lasse.

¹ Think. ² Foolish. ³ Forsaketh. ⁴ A little. ⁵ Believe
 Terrified. ⁷ Profit.

"Forthi, take herte, and thynk right as a
knyght,
Thorwe love is broken alday every lawe ;
Kythe¹ now somewhat thi curage and thi myght :
Have mercy on thiself for any awe ; 620
Lat not this wreched wo thyne herte gnawe ;
But, manly, set the world on six and sevene,²
And if thou deye a martyr, go to hevене !

“I wol myself ben with the at this dede,
Theigh Ich and alle my kyn, upon a stounde,⁸
Shul in a strete, as dogges, ligen dede,
Thorgh gyrt with many wyde and bloody wounde ;
In every cas I wol a frend ben founde ;
And if the list here sterven as a wreche,
Adieu, the devel spede hym that it reche !” 630

This Troylus gan with tho wordes quykken,
And seyde, “Frende, *graunte mercy*,⁴ Ich as-
sente ;

But certeynly, thow maist not so me priken.
Ne payne non ne may me so tormente,
That, for no cas, it is not myn entente, —
At shorte wordes, — thogh I dyen sholde,
'To ravysshen hire, but if hire-self it wolde.”

“Why, so mene I,” quod Pandare, “alle
this day ;
But tel me thanne, hastow hire wil asayde,
That sorwest thus?” And he answerde hym
“Nay.” 64c

¹ Exhibit. ² In confusion. Cf. *King Richard II.*, act ii., sc. 2
p. 132. ³ Moment. ⁴ Many thanks.

"Wherof ertow," quod Pandare "thanne
amayed,¹

That nost not that she wol ben yvel apeyed²
To ravyssh hire, syn thou hast noght ben
there,

But if that Jove told it in thyn ere?

"Forthy ris up, as noght ne were, anon,
And wessh thi face, and to the kyng thou
wende,

Or he may wondren wheder thou ert gon ;
Thow most with wisdom hym and other blende,³
Or upon cas⁴ he may efter the sende,
Er thou be war ; and shortly, brother deere,
Be glad, and lat me werke in this matere. 651

"For I shal shape it so that sikerly
Thow shalt this nyght somtyme, in som manere,
Com speken with thi lady prively,
And by hire wordes ek, as by hire cheere,
Thow shalt ful soone aperceyve and wel here
Al hire entente, and, in this cas, the beste ;
And fare now wele, for in this poynte I reste."

The swifte Fame,⁵ which that false thynges
Egal reporteth, like the thynges trewe, 660
Was thorgh Troye yfled, with preste⁶ wynges,
Fro man to man, and made this tale al newe,
How Calkas doghter, with hire bryghte hewe,
At parlement, withouten wordes more,
Ygraunted was in chaunge of Antenore.

¹ Dismayed ² Dissatisfied. ³ Blind ⁴ Chance. ⁵ See *The House of Fame*. ⁶ Quick (It. *presto*, prompt; Fr. *prêt*, ready).

The whiche tale anon right as Cryseyde
 Hadde herde, — she, which that of hir fader
 roghte,¹

As in this cas, right noght, ne when he
 deyede, —

Ful bisily to Juppiter besoghte
 Geve hym meschaunce that this tretis broghte .
 But shortly, lest thise tales sothe were, 671
 She dorst at no wight axen it for feere.

As she that hadde hire herte and al hire
 mynde

On Troylus ysette so wonder faste,
 That al this world ne myghte hire love un-
 bynde,

Ne Troylus out of hire herte caste ;
 She wol ben his whil that hire lif may laste ;
 And she thus brenneth bothe in love and drede,
 So that she nyste what was best to rede.²

But as men seen in toun, and alle aboute,
 That wommen usen ³ frendes to visite, 681
 So to Cryseyde of wommen com a route,
 For pitous joie, and wenden hire delite,⁴
 And with hire tales, dere ynough a myte !⁵
 'This wommen, which that in the cite dwelle,
 They set hem down, and seyde as I shal telle.

Quod firste that oon, "I am glad trewely,
 By-cause of yow that shal youre fader se."
 Another seyde, "Ywys, so nam not I,

¹ Recked. ² Knew not what course was best. ³ Are used
 Thought to delight her. ⁴ Cf. iii. 1161, and *Canterbury Tales*, l.
 63335, 1, 195.

For al to litel hath she with us be." 690
 Quod tho the thridde, " I hope, ywis, that she
 Shal brynge us the pees on every syde,
 Thanne, when she goth, almyghty God hire
 gyde ! "

Tho wordes, and tho wommannisshe thynges,
 She herde hem right as thogh she thennes were,¹
 For, God it woot, hire herte on other thyng is ;
 Although the body sate amonge hem there,
 Hire advertens is alwey elles-where ;
 For Troylus ful fast her soule soghte,
 Withouten worde, on hym alwey she thoghte.

Thise wommen, that thus wenden hire to
 please, 701

Aboute noght gonne al hire tales spende ;
 Swich vanite ne kan don hire non ese,
 As she that al this mene while brende
 Of other passioun than that they wende :
 So that she felt almoost her herte dye
 For wo, and wery of that compaignye.

For whiche she no lenger myght restreyne
 Hir teres, they gonne soo up to welle ;
 That gafe signes of the bitter peyne, 710
 In which hyr spirit was, and muste dwelle,
 Remembryng hyr from heven unto which helle
 She fallen was, sith she forgoth the sighte
 Of Troylus ; and sorrowfully she syghte.²

And thilke fooles, sittynge hire aboute,
 Wenden that she wepte and sykede soore,

¹ As though she were absent. ² Sighed.

Bycause that she shold out of that route
 Departen, and nevere pleye with hem more ;
 And they that hadde yknowen hire of yoore
 Seigh hire so wepe, and thoght it kyndenesse,¹
 And eche of hem wepte for hire distresse. 721

And bisily they gonnen hire conforten
 Of thyng, God woot, on which she litel thoghte
 And with hire tales wenden hire disporten,
 And to be glad they oft hire bysoghte ;
 But which an ese therwith they hire wroghte,
 Right as a man is esed for to feele
 For ache of hed to clawen hym on his heele.

But efter al this nyce vanite,
 They took hire leve, and hom they wente alle ;
 Cryseyde, ful of sorwful pitee, 731
 Into hire chaumbre up wente out of the halle,
 And on hire bed she gan for ded to falle,
 In purpos nevere thennes for to rise,
 And thus she wroghte, as I shal yowe devyse.

Hire ownded here,² that sonnyssh was of
 hewe,

She rente, and ek hire ȳngeres longe and smale
 She wronge ful oft, and bad God on hire rewe,
 And with the deth to don boote on hire bale ;
 Hire hewe, whilom bright, that tho was pale, 74c
 Bar witnesse of hire wo, and hire constreynte ;
 And thus she spake, sobbynge in hire com
 pleynte.

“Allas !” quod she, “out of this regoun,

¹ Sympathy, natural feeling. ² Wavy hair (Lat. *unda*)

I, woful wrech and infortuned wight,
And born in corsed constellacioun,
Moot goon, and thus departen fro my knyght!
Wo worth,¹ allas! that ilke dayes lyght,
On which I seigh him first with eyen tweyne,
That causeth me, and I hym, al this peyne!”

Therwith the teres from hire eyen two 750
Doun fille, as shoures in Aprille swithe;²
Hire white brest she bet, and for the wo,
Efter the deth she cryed a thousand sythe,³
Syn he that wont hire wo was for to lithe,⁴
She moot forgon; for which disaventure
She held hire-self a forlost creature.

She seyde, “How shal he doon and Ich also?
How shold I lyve if that I fro hym twynne?
O deere herte, ek, that I love so,
Who shal that sorw slen,⁵ that ye ben inne? 760
O Calkas, fader, thyn be al this synne!
O moder myn, that cleped were Argyve,⁶
Wo worth that day that thow me bere on
lyve!

“To what fyn shold I lyve and sorwen thus?
How shold a fissh withouten water dure?
What is Cryseyde worth from Troylus?
How shold a plaunte, or lyves creature,
Lyve withouten his kynde⁷ noriture?
For which ful oft a by-worde⁸ here I seye,
That rooteles mot grene soone deye. 770

¹ Be. ² Quickly. ³ Times. ⁴ Lessen. ⁵ Slay. ⁶ The names of Cryseyde and her mother do not appear in classical story. ⁷ Natural. ⁸ Proverb.

“ I shal doon thus, syn neither swerde ne
darte

Dar I non handlen for the cruelte,
That ilke day that I from yow departe,
If sorwe of that nyl nat my bane be,
’Thanne shal no mete or drynke com in me,
Til I my soule out of my breste unshethe ;
And thus my-selven wold I don to dethe.

“ And, Troylus, my clothes everychon
Shal blake ben, in tokennynge, herte swete !
That I am as out of this worlde ygon, 78a
That wonte was yow to setten in quiete ;
And of myn ordre,¹ ay til deth me mete,
The observaunce evere in youre absens,
Shal sorw ben, compleynte, and abstinence.

“ Myn herte, and ek the woful goost ther
inne,
Byquethe I with youre spirit to compleyne
Eternaly, for they shal nevere twynne ;
For thogh in eirth ² ytwynned be we tweyne,
Yet in the feld of pite, out of peyne,
That height Elysos,³ shal we ben yfeere,⁴ 79a
As Orpheus and Erudice his feere.⁵

“ Thus, herte myne, for Antenor, allas !
I soone shal ben chaunged, as I weene ;
But how shul ye don in this sorwful cas ?
How shal youre tendre herte this sustene ?
But, herte myne, forget this sorw and teene,⁶

¹ Class. ² Earth. ³ Elysium. ⁴ Together. ⁵ Companion.
The story of Orpheus and his wife Eurydice is in the *Metamor-
phoses*, book x., fable 1. ⁶ Grief.

And me also ; for, sothly for to seye,
So ye wel fare, I reche noghte to deye."

How myght it everè yred ben or ysonge,
The pleynte that she made in hire distresse,
I not ; but, as for me, my litel tonge, 801
If I discryven wold hire hevynesse,
It sholde make hire sorwe seme lesse
Thanne that it was, and childishly deface
Hire heighe compleynte ; and therfor Ich it
pace.

Pandare, which that sente from Troylus
Was unto Cryseyde, as ye han herde devyse,
That for the beste it was accorded thus, .
And he ful glad to don hym that servyse,
Unto Cryseyde, in a ful faire wyse, 810
Ther as she lay in torment and in rage,
Com hire to telle alle holly his message ;

And fonde that she hire-selven gan to grete
Ful pitously ; for, with hire salte teres,
Her breste, hire face ybathed was ful wete,
Hire myghty tresses of hire sonnysshe heres,
Unbroiden, hangen al aboute hire eeres ;
Which gaf hym verray signal of matere
Of deth, which that hire herte gan desire.

Whan she hym saugh she gan for sorwe anon
Hire tery face atwixe hire armes hyde ; 821
For which this Pandare is so wo bigon,
That in the hous he myghȝ urneth abyde,

As he that pite hadde on every syde ;
 For if Cryseyde hadde erst compleyned soore
 Tho gan she pleyne a thousand tyme moore.

And in hire aspre ¹ pleynte, thus she seyde :
 ‘ Pandare first of joies moo than two
 Was cause causynge unto me, Cryseyde,
 That now transmued ben in cruel wo ; 83c
 Wher ² shal I seye to yow welcom or no,
 That aldirfirste me broght unto servyse
 Of love, alas ! that endeth in swich wyse ?

“ Endeth thanne love in wo ? Ye ! or men
 lieth,

And alle worldly blisse, as thynketh me ;
 The ende of blisse ay sorw it ocupieth ;
 And who-so troweth not that it so be,
 Lat hym upon me, woful wreche, ysee,
 That my-self hate, and ay my burthe acorse,
 Felynge alwey, fro wikke I go to worse. 84c

“ Who-so me seeth, he seeth sorwe al atones
 Peyne, torment, pleynte, wo and distresse ;
 Out of my woful body harm ther non is,
 As angwissh, langour, cruel bitternesse,
 Anoy,³ smert, drede, furye, and ek sekenesse ;
 I trowe ywis from heven teres reyne,
 For pite of myn aspre and cruel peyne.”

“ And thow, my suster, ful of discomfort,”
 Quod Pandarus, “ what thynkestow to doo ?
 Why ne hastow to thi-selve som reporte ? ⁴ 85c
 Why wiltow thus thiself, alas, fordo !

¹ Sharp. ² Whether. ³ Harm. ⁴ Respect.

Leef al this werk, and take now hede to
That ¹ I shal seyne, and herkene, of goode en-
tente,

This message whiche by me Troylus the sent."

Torned hire tho Cryseyde, a wo makynge
So grete, that it a deth was for to se ;
"Allas !" quod she, "what wordes may ye
brynge ?

What wol my deere herte seyne to me,
Which that I drede neveremo to se ?
Wol he han pleynte or teres or ² I wende ? 860
I have ynoghe, if he thereafter sende."

She was right swich to seen in hire visage,
As is that wight that men on beere bynde ;
Hire face, like ³ of Paradis the ymage,
Was al ychaunged in another kynde ;
The pleye, the laughtre men were wonte to
fynde

On hire, and ek hire joies everychone
Ben fled, and thus lith now Cryseyde allone.

Aboute hire eyen two a purple rynge
Bytrent, ⁴ in sothfast toknyng of hyre peyne,
That to beholde it was a dedely thyng, 871
For whiche Pandare myghte nat restreyne
The teres from his eyen for to reyne ;
But natheles, as he best myght, he seyde
From Troylus thise wordes to Cryseyde.

"Loo ! nece, I trowe wel ye han herde al
howe

¹ That which. ² Ere. ³ That is, formerly like. ⁴ Wound around

The kyng, with other lordes, for the beste,
 Hath made eschaunge of Antenor and yowe,
 That cause is of this sorw and this unreste ;
 But how this cas doth Troylus moleste, 88a
 That may non erthly mannes tonge seye ;
 For verray wo his wit is alle awaye.

“ For which we han so sorwed, he and I,
 That into litel both it hadde us slawe ;
 But, thorgh my conseil this day fynaly,
 He somewhat is fro wepyng now withdrawe ;
 And semeth me that he desireth fawe ¹
 With yow to ben al nyght for to devyse
 Remede in this, if ther were any wyse.

“ This, shorte and pleyne, theffect ² of my
 message, 89a
 As ferforth as my wit kan comprehende ;
 For ye, that ben of tormente in swich rage,
 May to no longe prologe as now entende.
 And hereupon ye may answer hym sende ;
 And, for the love of God, my nece deere,
 So lef this wo or ³ Troylus be heere.”

“ Gret is my wo,” quod she, and sighte ⁴
 soore,
 As she that feleth dedely sharp distresse ;
 But yet to me his sorwe is muchel more,
 That love hym bet than he hymself, I gesse ;
 Allas, for me hath he swich hevynesse ! 90a
 Kan he for me so pitously compleyne ?
 Ywis, this sorw doubleth al my peyne.

¹ Fain. ² Substance. ³ Ere. ⁴ Sighed.

"Grevous to me, God woote¹ is for to twynne,"¹

Quod she, "but yet it hardere is to me,
To sen that sorwe which that he is inne,
For wel wot I it wol my bane be,
And dye I wol in certeyne," tho quod she :
"But bid hym come, er Deth, that thus me
threteth,
Dryve out that gost which in myne herte bet-
eth." 910

Th'ise wordes seyde, she on hire armes two
Fil gruf,² and gan to wepen pitously :
Quod Pandarus, "Allas, why do ye so ?
Syn wel ye woote the tyme is faste by
That he shal com ; aris up hastely,
That he yow nat biwepen thus ne fynde,
But ye wol have hym woode³ out of his mynde.

"For wiste he that ye ferde in this manere,
He wold hymselfen sle : and if I wende
To han this fare, he sholde nat com heere 920
For al the good that Priam may despende :
For to what fyn he wold anon pretende,
That knowe I wel ; and forthi yet I seye,
So lef this sorwe, or, platly,⁴ he wol dye ;

"And shapeth yow his sorw for tabrigge,
And noght encrease, leve⁵ nece swete !
Beth rather to hym cause of flat than egge,⁶
And with som wysdom ye his sorwe beete :⁷

¹ Separate. ² Flat. ³ Mad. ⁴ Flatly. ⁵ Loved. ⁶ Cause his sorrows to be alleviated (smoothed with the flat sword) rather than to cut with a keener edge. ⁷ Abate

What helpeth it to wepen ful a strete,
 Or thogh ye bothe in salte terys dreynte ? ¹ 930
 Bet is a tyme of cure ay than of pleynte.

“ I mene thus : whan I hym hyder brynge,
 Syn ye be wyse, and bothe of oon assente,
 So shapeth how distourbe your goynge,
 Or come ageyn soone efter ye be wente, —
 Wommen ben wyse in short avysemente, --
 And lat sen how youre wit shal now availe ;
 And what that I may help, it shal not faile.”

“ Go,” quod Cryseyde, “ and, uncle, trewely
 I shal don al my myght me to restreyne 940
 From wepyng in his sight, and bysily
 Hym for to glade I shal don al my payne,
 And in myn herte seken every veyne ;
 If to his soor there may be founden salve,
 It shal not lakke, certeyn, on myn halve.” ²

Goth Pandarus, and Troylus he soghte,
 Til in a temple he fonde hym al alone,
 As he that of his lif no lenger roghte,³
 But to the pitouse goddes everychon 949
 Ful tenderly he preyde, and made his mone,
 To doon ⁴ hym soon out of this worlde to pace
 For wel he thoghte ther was non other grace.

And shortely, al the sothe for to seyne.
 He was so fallen in dispaire that day,
 That outrely he shope hym for to deye ;
 For righte thus was his argument alwey,
 He seyde he nas but lorne, waylawey !

¹ Drowned. ² My part. ³ Recked. ⁴ Cause.

‘ For al that cometh, comth by necessite ;
Thus to ben lorne, it is my desteyne,

“ For certeynly, this woote I wel,” he sayde,
“ That forsyght of devyne purveyaunce 961
Hathe seyn alwey me to forgon Cryseyde,
Syn God seth every thyng, out of doutaunce,
And hem dispoñeth thorgh his ordinaunce,
In hire ¹ merites sothely for to be,
As they shul comen by predesteyne.²

“ But natheles, alas ! whom shal I leve ? ³
For ther ben grete clerkes many oone,
That destyne thorgh argumentez preve ;
And som men seyn that nedely ther is noon,
But that fre choys is geven us everichon : 971
O waylawey ! so sleighe ern ⁴ clerkes olde,
That I not ⁵ whos opinion I may holde.

“ For som men seyn if God seth al byforne,
Ne God may not deseyved ben, *parde* !
Than moot it fallen, theigh ⁶ men hadde it
sworne,

That purveyaunce hath seyn befor to be ;
Wherfor I seye, that from eterne if he
Hathe wiste byforn our thought ek as oure dede,
We have no fre choys, as thise clerkes rede.⁷

“ For other thoghte, nor other dede also, 981
Myghte nevere ben, but swich as purveyaunce,
Which may nat ben deceyved nevere moo,
Hath feled ⁸ byforne, withouten ignoraunce ;

¹ Their. ² Cf. Boethius, *Consolations of Philosophy*, book v. prose 2, 3, for all this discussion to l. 1059. ³ Believe. ⁴ Are. Know not. ⁵ Though. ⁷ Interpret. ⁸ Perceived.

For if ther myghte ben a variaunce
 To wrythen ¹ out fro Goddes purveyinge,
 Ther nere no prescience of thyng comynge ;

“ But it were rather an opinyoun
 Uncertain, and no stedfast forseynge ;
 And, certes, that were an abusoun, 990
 That God shold han no parfit clere wetyng,²
 More than we men, that han douteous ³ wen-
 ynge,

But swich an erreure upon God to gesse,
 Were fals, and foule, and wikked corsednesse.

“ Ek this is an opinyoun of some,
 That han hire top ful heigh and smothe yshore ;
 They seyn right thus, that thyng is nat to come
 For that the prescience hath seyne byfore
 That it shal come ; but they seyn that therfore
 That it shal come, therfor the purveyaunce
 Woot it **bifore** withouten ignorance. 1001

“ And in this manere this necessite
 Retorneth in his part contrarye ageyn ;
 For nedfully ⁵ byhoveth it not to be,
 That thilke thynges fallen in certeyn
 That ben purveyed ; but nedly,⁵ as they seyne
 Bihoveth it that thynges which that falle,
 That thei in certein ben purveied alle.

“ I mene as thogh I labourede me in this,
 To enqueren which thyng cause of which
 thyng be ; 1010
 As whether that the prescience of God is

¹ Turn. ² Knowledge. ³ Doubtful. ⁴ Clerics, with tortured
 “ tops ” ⁵ Of necessity.

The certein cause of the necessite
 Of thynges that to comen ben, *parde* !
 Or if necessite of thynges comynge
 Be cause certein of the purveyinge.

“ But now nenforce I me nat in shewynge
 How the ordre of causes stant ; but wel woot I
 That it bihoveth that the bifallynge
 Of thynges wiste bifor certainly
 Be necessarie, al seme it nat therby, 1020
 That prescience put fallynge ¹ necessaire
 To thynges to come, al falle it foule or faire.

“ For if ther sit a man yonde on a see,²
 Than by necessite bihoveth it
 That certes thyn opinioun soth be,
 That wenest or coniectest that he sit ;
 And, further over, now ageinwarde ³ yit,
 Lo, right so is it on the part contrarie,
 As thus, nowe herkene, for I wol nat tarie :

“ I sey, that if the opinioun of the 1030
 Be soth for that he sit, than seye I this,
 That he moot sitten by necessite ;
 And thus necessite in either is ;
 For in hym nede of sittynge is, ywis,⁴
 And in the nede of soth ; and thus forsoth
 Ther mot necessite ben in yow bothe.

“ But thow maist seyne the man sit nat ther-
 fore
 That thyn opinioun of his sittynge sothe is ;
 But rather, for the man sat there byfore,

¹ Befalling ² Seat. ³ On the other side. ⁴ Truly

Therfor is thyn opinioun soth, ywys; 1040
And I seye, thogh the cause of soth¹ at this
 Cometh of his sittynge, yet necessite
 Is interchaunged both in hym and the.

“Thus in the same wyse, out of douteaunce,
 I may wel maken, as it semeth me,
 My resonyng of Goddes purveiaunce,²
 And of the thynges that to comen be;
 By whiche reson men may wel ysee
 That thylke thynges that in erthe falle,
 That by necessite they comen alle. 1050

“For althogh that for thyng shal come, ywys,
 Therfor it is purveyed certeynly,
 Nat that it cometh for it purveied is;
 Yet natheles bihoveth it nedfully,
 That thyng to come be purveied trewely,
 Or elles thynges that purveied be,
 That they bitiden by necessite.

“And this sufficeth right ynogh, certeyn,
 For to distruye oure fre choys everydele.
 But now is this abusioun to seyne, 1060
 That fallynge of the thynges temporel
 Is cause of Goddes prescience eternal;
 Now trewely that is a fals sentence,³
 That thyng to come sholde cause his presci-
 ence.

“What myght I wene, and I hadde swich a
 thoght,
But that God purveieth thyng that is to come

¹ Truth. ² Providence ³ Opinion

For that it is to come, and elles noght?
 So myght I wene that thynges alle and some,
 That whilom ben bifalle and overe-come,¹
 Ben cause of thilke soveyren purveyaunce,
 That forwoot ² alle, withouten ignoraunce. 1071

“And over al this, yet seye I moore herto, —
 That right as whan I woot there is o thyng,
 Ywis, that thyng mot nedfully be so ;
 Ek right as whan I woote a thyng comynge,
 So mot it come ; and thus the bifallynge
 Of thynges that ben wiste before the tyde,
 They mowe not ben eschued on no syde.”

Than seyde he thus : “Almyghty Jove in
 trone,
 That woost of al this thyng the sothfastnesse,
 Rewe on my sorwe, or do me dyen sone, 1081
 Or brynge Cryseyde and me fro this distresse.”
 And while he was in al this hevynesse,
 Disputynge with hymself in this matere,
 Com Pandare in, and seyde as ye may here.

“O myghty God,” quod Pandarus, “in trone !
 Ey ! who say ³ evere a wys man faren so ?
 Whi, Troylus, what thynkestow to doon ?
 Hastow swich luste to ben thyn owne fo ?
 What ! *parde*, yet is nat Cryseyde ago !⁴ 1090
 Why lust the so thiself fordoon for drede,
 That in thyne hed thyn eyne semen dede ?

“Hastow noght lyved many a yere byforne
 Withouten hire. and ferde ful wel at ese ?

¹ Supervened. ² Foreknew. ³ Saw. ⁴ Gone

Ertow for hire and for non other borne ?

Hath Kynde¹ the wroghte al oonly hire to
plese ?

Lat be ! and thynk right thus in thy disese,
That, in the dees² right as ther fallen chaunces,
Right so in love there com and gon plesaunces.

“ And yet this is a wonder moost of alle,
Why thou thus sorwest, syn thou nost not yit,
Touchynge hire goynge, how that it shall falle ,
Ne gif she kan hire-self distorben it, 1103
Thow hast nat yit assayed al hire wit ;
A man may al by-tyme his nekke beede³
Whan it shal of, and sorwen at the nede.

“ Forthi, take hede of al that I shal seye ;
I have with hire yspoke, and longe ybe,
So as acorded was bytwyxe us tweye ;
And evermoo me thynketh thus, that she 1110
Hath somewhat in hire hertes privite
Wherwith she can, if I shal right arede,
Distorbe al this, of which thou ert in drede.

“ For which my conseil is, whan it is nyght,
Thow to hire go, and mak of this an ende ;
And blisful Juno, thorgh hire grete myghte,
Shal, as I hope, hire grace unto us sende.
Myn herte seith, certein she shal nat wende ;
And forthi, put thyne herte a while in reste,
And hold this purpos, for it is the beste.” 1120

This Troylus answerde, and sighte⁴ soore,
“ Thow saist right wel, and I wol doon righ
so ;”

¹ Nature. ² Dice (Fr. *dés*). ³ Offer. ⁴ Sighed.

And what hym liste, he seyde unto hym moore ;
 And whan that it was tyme for to go,
 Ful prively hymself, withouten mo,
 Unto hire come, as he was wonte to doon,
 And how they wroghte I shal yow tellen soone.

Soth is, than when they gonnen first to meete,
 So gan the peyne hire hertes for to twyste,
 That neither of hem myghte other grete, 1130
 But hem in armes tooke, and efter kyste ;
 The lasse woful of hem bothe nyste
 Wher that he was, ne myght o word out brynge,
 As I seyde erst, for wo and for sobbynge.

The woful teres that they leten falle
 As bittre weren out of teres kynde
 For peyne, as is ligne aloes, or galle
 (So bittre teres wepe noghte, as I fynde, 1138
 The woful Myrra,¹ thorgh the barke and rynde),
 That in this world there nys so hard an herte,
 That nolde han rewed on hire peynes smerte.

But when hire woful, wery gostes tweyne
 Retourned ben, ther as hem owen to dwelle,
 And that somewhat to woken² gan the peyne
 By lengthe of pleynte, and ebben gan the welle
 Of hire teres, and the herte unswelle,
 With brokyn vois, al hors for shrigh³, Cryseyde
 To Troylus thise ilke wordes seyde.

“O Jove, I deye, and mercy I biseche !
 Helpe, Troylus !” and therwithal hire face 1150
 Upon his breste she leyde, and lefte speche,

¹ Who was changed into the myrrh. ² Weaken. ³ For shrieking

Hire woful spirit from his propre place,
 Right with the worde, alwey in poynte to pace;¹
 And thus she lith, with hewes pale and grene,
 Thal whilom fressh and fairest was to sene.

This Troylus that on hire gan biholde,
 Clepyng hire name, and she lay as for dede,
 Withouten answeere, and felt her lymes colde,²
 Hire eyen throwen upwarde to hire hed,
 This sorwful man kan now noon other rede,
 But ofte tyme hire colde mouthe he kyste; 1161
 Wher³ hym was wo, God and hymself it wiste

He rist hym up, and long streight he hire
 layde;

For signe of lyf, for oght he kan or may,
 Kan he non fynde in nothyng of Cryseyde,
 For which his songe ful oft is "Walaway!"
 But when he saugh that specheles she lay,
 With sorwful vois, and herte of blisse al bare,
 He seyde how she was fro this worlde yfare.

So efter that he longe hadde hyre compleyned,
 His hondes wronge, and seyde that was to seye,
 And with his teris salt hire breest byreyned,⁴
 He gan tho teris wipen of ful dreye, 1173
 And pitously gan for the soule preye,
 And seyde, "O Lord, that set ert in thi trone,
 Rew ek on me, for I shal folwe hir sone."

She colde was, and withouten sentemente,⁵
 For oght he woot, for breth ne felt he non:
 And this was hym a preignant argument, 1179

¹ Pass. ² Grow cold. ³ Whether. ⁴ Sprinkled. ⁵ Sensation

That she was forth out of the world agone:
 And when he sey ther was non other wone¹
 He gan hire lymes dresse, in swich manere,
 As men don hem that shal be layd on beere;
 And efter this, with sterne and cruel herte,
 His swerde anon out of his shethe he twyghte,²
 Hymself to sleen, how sore that hym smerte,
 So that his soule hire soule folwen myghte,
 Ther as the dome of Mynos³ wold it dighte;
 Syn Love and cruel Fortune it ne wolde,
 That in this world he langer lyven sholde. 1190

Than seyde he thus, fulfilld of heigh desdayn,
 "O cruel Jove, and thow Fortune adverse,
 This al and som, that falsly have ye slayn
 Cryseyde! and syn ye may do me no werse,
 Fy on youre myght and werkes so dyverse!
 Thus cowardly ye shul me nevere wynne,
 Ther shal no deth me fro my lady twynne.

"For I this world, syn ye have slayn hire
 thus,

Wol lete, and folw hire spirit low or heye;
 Shal nevere lover seyn that Troylus 1200
 Dar not for fere with his lady dye;
 For, certein, I wol bere hire companye;
 But, syn ye wol not suffure us lyven here,
 Yet suffreth that our soules ben yfeere.⁴

"And thow cite, in which I lyve in wo!
 And thow Priam, and bretheren alle ifere!

¹ Way. ² Jerked. ³ Minos, son of Zeus and Europa, was in life king of Crete, and after death judge of the shades. See Dante *Inferno*, v. 4; *Odyssey*, xi 567; *Æneid*, vi. 434. ⁴ Together.

And thow my moder, farwel, for I go !
 And, Attropes,¹ mak redy thow my beere !
 And thow Cryseyde, O swete herte deere,
 Receyve now my spirit ! ” wolde he seye, 1210
 With swerd at herte, al redy for to dye.

But, as God wold, of swough² she therwith
 brayde,³

And gan to sike, and “ Troylus,” she cryede ;
 And he answerde, “ Lady myn, Cryseyde,
 Lyve ye yit ? ” and lete his swerde down glide.
 “ Ye, herte myn, that thanked be Cupide ! ”
 Quod she, and therwithal she sore sighte,
 And he bigan to glad hire as he myghte.

Took hire in armes two, and kyste hire ofte,
 And hire to glade, he dide al his entente, 1220
 For which hire gooste, that flied⁴ ay o lofte,
 Into hire woful herte agein it wente :
 But, at the laste, as that hire eye glente⁵
 Asyde, anon she gan his swerde aspye,
 As it lay bare, and gan for feere crie,

And asked hym whi he it hadde out drawe ;
 And Troylus anon the cause hire tolde,
 And how hymself therwith he wolde han slawe
 For which Cryseyde upon hym gan byholde,
 And gan hym in hire armes faste folde, 1230
 And seyde, “ O mercy God, lo, which a dede !
 Allas ! how neigh we weren bothe dede !

“ Thanne if I nadde yspoken, as grace was,

¹ The one of the Fates who cut the thread of life. See iii. 732
 also iv 1545 ² Swoon. ³ Awoke. ⁴ Flickered. ⁵ Glanced.

Ye wold han slayn yowre-self anon ? " quod she.
 "Ye, douteles." And she answerde, " Allas !
 For, by that ilke lorde that made me !
 I nold a forlonge wey ¹ o lyve have be
 After your deth, to han ben crowned quene
 Of al that lond the sonne on shyneth sheene.

" But with this selve swerde, which that here
 is, - 1240

Myself I wolde han slayn," quod she tho.
 " But hoo ! for we han right ynogh of this ;
 And lat us rise and streighte to bedde go ;
 And there lat us speken of oure wo,
 For by this mortar, ² which that I se brenne,
 Know I ful wel that day is not ferre henne."

When they were in hire bedde in armes folde,
 Noght was it like tho nyghtes here biforn,
 For pitously ech other gan byholde,
 As they that hadden al hire blisse ylorn, 1250
 Byweylynge ay the .day that they were borne ;
 Til, at the laste, this sorwful wight, Cryseyde,
 To Troylus this ilke wordis seyde.

" Loo ! herte myne, wel woot ye this," quod
 she,

" That if a wight alwey his wo compleyne,
 And seketh noght how holpen for to be,
 It nis but folye, and encresse of peyne :
 And sin that here assembled be we tweyne,
 To fynde boote ³ of wo that we ben inne,
 It were al tyme soone to begynne. 1260

¹ I would not a short tyme. ² A wax right-taper. ³ Remedy.

“ I am a womman, as ful wel ye woote,
 And as I am avysed sodeynly,
 So wol I telle yow, whil it is hoote ;
 Me thynketh thus, that neither ye nor I
 Oght half this wo to maken, skilfully ;¹
 For ther is art ynough for to redresse
 That yet is mys, and slen this hevynesse.

“ Soth is, the wo the whiche that we ben inne.
 For oght I wot, for nothyngel elles is,
 But for the cause that we sholden twynne ;²
 Considered al, there nys no more amys : 127:
 But what is thanne a remede unto this,
 But that we shape us soone for to mete ?
 This al and som, my dere herte swete !

“ Now, that I shal wele bryngen it aboute
 To com agein, soon efter that I go,
 Therof am I no maner thyngel in doute ;
 For, dredeles, within a wowke³ or two
 I shal ben here ; and that it may be so,
 By alle righte, and in a wordes fewe, 1280
 I shal yow wel an heepe of weyes shewe.

“ For which I wol nat maken longe sermoun,
 For tyme yloste may noght recovered be,
 But I wol gon to my conclusioun,
 And in the best, in oght that I kan see :
 And, for the love of God, forgeve it me,
 If I speke oght agenis youre hertes reste ;
 For trewely I speke it for the beste ;

“ Makynge alwey a protestacioun,

¹ Reasonably. ² Separate. ³ Week.

That now thise wordes, which that I shal seye,
 Nys but to shewen yowe my mocioun, 1291
 To fynde unto oure help the beste weye,
 And taketh it non otherwyse, I yow preye ;
 For, in effect, what so ye me comaunde,
 That wol I don ; for that ys no demaunde.¹

" Now herkeneth this : ye han wel under-
 stonde,

My goynge graunted is by parlement
 So ferforth, that it may not be withstonde
 For al this world, as by my jugement ;
 And syn ther helpeth non avysement 1300
 To letten it, lat it passe out of mynde,
 And lat us shape a better wey to fynde.

" The sothe is, the twynnyng of us tweyne
 Wol us disese,² and crueliche anoye :³
 But hym bihoveth somtyme han a peyne
 That serveth love, if that he wol have joye :
 And syn I shal no forther out of Troie .
 Than I may ride agein on half a morwe,⁴
 It oghte lasse causen us to sorwe.

" So as I shal not so ben hidde in muwe,⁵
 That day by day, myn owen herte deere, 1311
 Syn wel ye wot that it is now a truwe,⁶
 Ye shal ful wel al myn estate yheere :
 And er that truwe is don I shal ben here,
 And thanne have ye bothe Antenor ywonne
 And me also ; beth glad now if ye konne.

¹ That goes without asking ² Discomfort. ³ Hurt. ⁴ Morn-
 ing. ⁵ Mew. ⁶ Truce.

“And thynk right thus : Cryseyde is now
agon ;

But what ! she shal com hastily agein !
And when, alas ? Bi God, lo ! right anon
Er dayes ten, this dar I saufly seyne ; 1320
And than at erste shal we be so feyne,
So as we shal togideres evere dwelle,
That al this worlde ne myght oure blisse telle.

“I see that ofte tyme, ther as we bene now,
That for the beste, oure conseil for to hide,
Ye speke not with me, nor I with yowe
In fourtenyght, ne se yow go ¹ ne ride.
May ye noght ten dayes thanne abide,
For myn honour, in swich an aventure ?
Ywys, ye mowe elles lite ² endure. 1330

“Ye knowe eke how that al my kyn is here,
But if that onlich it my fader be ;
And ek myne other thynges, al yfeere,³
And nameliche,⁴ — my deere herte ! — ye,
Whom that I nolde leven for to se,
For al this world, as wyde as it hath space,
Or elles se I nevere Joves face !

“Why trowe ye my fader in this wyse
Coveiteth so to se me, but for drede,
Lest in this toun that folkes me despise, 1340
Because of hym, for his unhappi dede ?
What woot my fader what lyf that I lede ?
For if he wiste in Troie how wel I fare,
Us nedede for my wendynge noght to care.

¹ Walk. ² Little. ³ Together. ⁴ Specially.

“Ye seen, that every day ek mor and more,
Men trete of pees, and it supposed is
That men the queene Eleyne ¹ shal restore,
And Grekes us restoren that is mys :
So, thogh ther nere ² comfort non but this,
That men purposen pees on every syde, 1350
Ye may the bettre at ese of herte abyde.

“For if that it be pees, myn herte deere,
The nature of the pees moot nedes dryve,
That men most entrecommunen yfere,
And to and fro ek ride and gon as blyve,
Al day as thykke as been ³ fleen from an hyve ;
And every wight han liberte to bleve ⁴
Whar as hym liste bet, withouten leve.

“And thogh so be that pees ther may be
non,
Ye hider, thogh ther never pees ne weere, 1360
I moste come ; for whider shold I gone ?
Or how, meschaunce ! sholde I dwelle there
Amange the men of armes evere in feere ?
For which, as wysely God my soule rede !
I kan not sen wherof ye sholden drede.

“Have here another wey, if it so be
That al this thyng ne may yow not suffise :
My fader, as ye knowen wele, *parde*,
Is old, and elde is ful of coveityse ; 1369
And I right now have founden al the gyse,
Withouten net, wherwith I shal hym hente ; ⁵
And herkeneth how, if that ye wol assente.

¹ Helen. ² Were not. ³ Bees. ⁴ Stay. ⁵ Take.

"Loo! Troylus, men seyne, that 'ful harde
it is

'The wolf ful, and the wether hoole to have : ' ¹

This is to seyn, that men ful oft, ywis,

Moot spenden part, the remenaunte for to
save :

For ay with gold men may the herte grave

Of hym that set is upon coveitise ;

And how I mene, I shal it yowe devyse.

"The moeble ² which that I have in this
toun 1380

Unto my fader shal I take and seye,

That right for truste, and for savacioun,

It sent is from a frend of his or tweye ;

The whiche frendes ferventliche hym preye,

To senden efter more and that in heye, ³

Whil that this town stante thus in jupartye. ⁴

"And that shal ben of gold an huge quantite,

Thus shal I seyn, but lest it folk aspiede,

This may be sente bi no wight but by me.

I shal ek shewen hym, if pees betyde, 1390

What frendes that Ich have on every syde,

Towarde the courte, to don the wrethe pace ⁵

Of Priamus, and don hym stonde in grace.

"So what for o thyng and for other, swete,

I shal hym so enchaunten with my sawes,

That right in hevene his soul is, shal he mete ;

For alle Appollo, or his clerkes lawes,

¹ Akin to the proverb, "You give the wolf the wether to keep"
Furniture (things movable). ² Haste (hie, to hasten). ³ *Feu parts*
evenly balanced chances. ⁴ Cause the wrath to pass. ⁵ Dream.

Or kalkulynge, awayleth nought thre hawes :¹
 Desire of gold shal so his soule blende,²
 That, as me liste, I shal wel make an ende. 1400

“And if he wol oght by his sorte³ it preve
 If that I lye, in certein I shal fonde⁴
 Destourben hym, and plukke hym by the sleve,⁵
 Makynge his sort, and beren hym on honde,
 He hath not wele the goddes understonde ;
 For goddes speken in amphibologies,⁶
 And for o soth they tellen twenty lyes.

“Ek drede fond first goddes, I suppose,
 Thus shal I seyn, and that his coward herte
 Made hym amys the goddes text to glose, 1410
 When he for-ferde⁷ out of Delphos sterte :
 And but I make hym soone to converte,
 And don my rede,⁸ within a day or tweye,
 I wol to yow oblige me to deye.”

And treweliche, as writen wel I fynde,
 That al this thyng was seyde in goode entent ;
 And that hire herte trewe was and kynde
 Towardis hym, and spak right as she mente ;
 And that she starf⁹ for wo neigh whan she wente,
 And was in purpos evere to be trewe ; 1420
 Thus writen they that of hire werkes knewe.

Tho Troylus, with herte and eres spradde,¹⁰
 Herde al this thyng devysen to and fro,
 And veriliche it semede that he hadde
 The selfe wit ;¹¹ but yit to late hire go

Hawberries. ² Blind. Divination. ⁴ Try. ⁵ That is
 interrupt ⁶ Ambiguities. ⁷ Thoroughly frightened. ⁸ Counsel
 Died. ¹⁰ Dilated. ¹¹ That is, agreed with Cryseyde.

His herte mysforgafe hym everemo ;
 And finaly he gan his herte wreste ¹
 To trusten hire, and toke it for the beste.

For which the grete furye of his penaunce
 Was queynte ² with hope ; and therewith hem
 bytwene 1430

Bygan for joye thamorouse daunce ;
 And as the bryddes, whan the sonne is shene,
 Deliten in hire songe, in leves grene,
 Right so the wordes that they spak yfeere
 Deliten hem, and make hire hertes chere.³

But natheles the wendinge of Cryseyde,
 For al this world may not out of his mynde ;
 For whiche ful oft he pitously hire preyde,
 That of hire heste ⁴ he may hire trewe fynde ;
 And seyde hire, " Certes if ye be unkynde, 1440
 And but ye come, at day set, into Troye,
 Ne shal I nevere have hele, honor, ne joye.

" For also sothe as sonne uprist o morwe,
 And, God, so wysely ⁵ thow me, woful wreche,
 To reste brynge out of this cruel sorwe,
 I wol my-selven sle, if that ye drecche : ⁶
 But of my deth though litel be to recche,⁷
 Yet or that ye me causen so to smerte,
 Dwelle rather here, myn owen swete herte.

" For trewely, myn owene lady deere, 1450
 I'ho sleightes yit that I have herde yowe steere,⁸
 Ful shapely ben to faylen alle yfeere ; ⁹

¹ Force. ² Quenched. ³ In this illustration Chaucer follows quite closely his Italian original. ⁴ Promise. ⁵ Truly. ⁶ Vers. ⁷ Reck. ⁸ Plan. ⁹ Fail all together.

For thus men seith, that oon thynketh the bere,
But al another thynketh the ledere;¹
Your sire is wis, and seyde is, out of drede,
'Men may the wise at-renne, and noght atrede.²

"It is ful hard to halten unespied
Bifor a crepul, for he kan the craft;
Youre fader is in sleighte as Argus eyed;
For al be that his moeble is hym byraft, 1460
His olde sleighte is yit so with hym laft,
Ye shal nat blynde hym for yowre womanbede,
Ne feyne arighte; and that is alle my drede.

"I not³ if pees shal everemo bitide;
But pees or no, for ernest ne for game,
I'woot syn Calkas on the Grekes syde
Hath oones ben, and lost so foule his name,
He dar no mor com here agein for shame;
For whiche that wey, for oght I kan espye,
To trusten on, nys but a fantasye. 1470

"Ye shal ek sen your fader shal yow glose
To ben a wife, and as he kan wel preche,
He shal som Greke so preyse and wele alose,⁴
That ravysshyn he shal yow with his speche;
Or do yow don be force as he shal teche;
And Troylus, on whom ye nyl han routhe,
Shal causeles so sterven in his trouthe.

"And over al this, youre fader shal despise
Us alle, and seyn this cite nys but lorne,
And that thassege nevere shal arise, 1480

¹ The bear has one mind, his leader quite a different one. ² Men may out-run the wise, but not out-counsel them. Cf. *Canterbury Tales*, l. 2449. ³ Know not. ⁴ Praise (Fr. *allouer*, Lat. *laus*).

For-why the Grekes han it alle s'vorne,
 Tyl we be sleyne, and doun our halles torn ;
 And thus he shal yow with his wordes feere ;¹
 That ay drede I that ye wol bleven² theere.

“ Ye shal ek seen so many a lusti knyght,
 Amange the Grekes, ful of worthynesse,
 And ech of hem, with herte, wit, and myght,
 To plesen yow don alle his bisynesse,
 That ye shul dullen of the rudenesse
 Of us cely³ Trojans, but if routhe 149c
 Remorde⁴ yow, or vertu of youre trouthe.

“ And this to me so grevous is to thynke,
 That fro my breeste it wol my soule sende ;
 Ne, dredeles, in me ther may not synke
 A good opynyoun, if that ye wende,
 For-why youre faderes sleighte wol us shende ;⁵
 And if ye gon as I have told you yore,
 So thynke I nam but deede, withoute more.

“ For which with humble, trewe, and pitouse
 herte

A thousand tyme mercy I yow preye, 1500
 So reweth on myn aspre⁶ peynes smerte,
 And doth somewhat, as that I shal yow seye :
 And lat us stele away bytwyxe us tweye,
 And thynke that foly is, when man may cheese
 For accident⁷ his substaunce ay to lese.

“ I mene thus, that syn we mow⁸ or day
 Wele stele away, and ben togidere so,

¹ Frighten. ² Remain. ³ Good, happy. ⁴ Strike you with remorse (literally, bite again) ⁵ Ruin. ⁶ Rough. ⁷ This word is used with its philosophical sense, — a non-essential. ⁸ May.

What wit were it to putten in assay —
 In cas ye sholden to youre fader go —
 If that ye myghten com agein or no? 1510
 Thus mene I, that were a grete folye
 To putten that sykernesse in jupartye.

"And, vulgarly to speken of substaunce,
 Of tresour may we bothe with us lede,
 Ynoghe to lyve in honour and plesaunce,
 Til unto tyme that we shal be dede ;
 And thus we may esshuen¹ al this drede ;
 For every other wey ye kan recorde,
 Myn herte ywis may therwith noght acorde.

"And hardily ne dredeth no poverté ; 1520
 For I have kyn and frendes elles where,
 That, thogh we comen in oure bare sherte,
 Us sholde neyther lakken golde ne gere,
 But ben honoured whil we dwellen there ;
 And gowe² anon, for as in myn entente,
 This is the best, if that ye wol assente."

Cryseyde, with a syk, ryght in this wyse
 Answerde : "Ywis, my deere herte trewe,
 We may wel stele away, as ye devyse,
 And fynden swich unthrifty wayes newe ; 1530
 But efterward ful sore it wol us rewe,
 And helpe me God so at my moste nede !
 As causeles ye suffren alle this drede ;

"For thylke day that I for cherisynge
 Or drede of fader, or of any other wight,
 Or for estat, delit, or for weddyng,

¹ Avoid. ² Let us go (go we).

Be fals to yow, my Troylus, my knyghte,
 Saturnes doughter Juno, thorgh hyre myghte,
 As wood as Achamante¹ do me dwelle
 Eternaliche in Stixe, the put² of helle ! 1540

“ And this on every god celestial
 I swere it yow, and ek on ech goddesse,
 On every nympe, and deyte infernal,
 On satyry and fawny more and lesse,³
 That halve goddes ben of wildernesse ;
 And Attropos⁴ my thred of lif to-breste,
 If I be fals ; now trowe me if yow leste.

“ And thow Symoys,⁵ that as an arwe, clere
 Thorgh Troye rennest ay downward to the se,
 Ber witnesse of this word that seyde is here !
 That thilke day that Ich untrewed be 1551
 To Troylus, myn owen herte fre,
 That thow retourne backwarde to thy welle,⁶
 And I with body and soule synk in helle.⁷

“ But that ye spek away thus for to go,
 And letten alle youre frendes, God forbede,
 For any womman that ye sholde so !
 And namely, syn Troye hath now swiche nede
 Of help ; and ek of o thyng taketh hede :
 If this were wist, my lyf lay in balaunce, 1560
 And youre honour, — God shilde us fro mys-
 chaunce !

“ And if so be that pees hereafter be take,

¹ As mad as Athamas, King of Thebes, made mad by one of the Furies, at the instigation of Juno. Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, iv. 417.
² Pit. ³ Satyr and faun, greater and less. ⁴ Cf. iv. 1208. ⁵ The Trojan river Simois. ⁶ Source. ⁷ Cf. Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*, act iii., sc. 3, ll. 190-203 ; and act iv., sc. 1, ll. 105-111.

As al day happeth after anger game,
Why, lord ! the wo and sorwe ye wolden make,
That ye ne dorste come ageyne for shame ;
And er that ye jupartē¹ so youre name,
Beth noght to hastif in this hote fare,
For hastif man ne wanteth nevere care.

“What trowe ye ek the peple alle aboute
Wold of it seye? It is ful right taredē,² 1570
They wolden seye, and swere it oute of doute,
That love ne drof yow noght to don this dede,
But lust voluptuous, and cowarde drede ;
Thus were al loste, ywis, myn herte deere.
Your honour, which that now shyneth so
cleere.

“And also thynketh on myn honeste,
That floureth yet, how foul I shold it shende,³
And with what filthe it spotted sholde be,
If in this fourme I sholde with yow wende,
And thogh I lyved unto the worldes ende, 1580
My name shold I never ageynwarde wyne ;
Thus were I lost, and that were routhe and
synne.

“And forthi, sle with reson al this hete ;
Men seyn, the suffraunt overcomth, *parde!*
Ek whoso wol han lief, he lyfe moot leete ;⁴
Thus maketh vertu of necessite
By paciens ; and thynke that lorde is he
Of Fortune ay, that noght wol of hire reche,
And she ne daunteth no wight but a wreche.

Jeopardize. ¹ To predict. ² Disgrace. ⁴ Cf Mark viii. 35

“And trusteth this, that certes, herte swete,
 Er Phebus suster, Lucyna ¹ the shene, 1591
 The Leon passe oute of this Ariete,²
 I wol ben here, withouten any wene ;³
 I mene, as help me Juno, hevynesse quene !
 The tenthe day, but if that deth messaile,⁴
 I wol you sene, withouten any fayle.”

“And now, so this be soth,” quod Troy-
 lus,

“I shal wel suffre unto the tenthe day,
 Syn that I se that nede it mot be thus ;
 But for the love of God, if it be may, 1600
 So lat us stele pryvely away :
 For evere in oone, as for to lyve in reste,
 Myn herte seith that it wol be the beste.”

“O mercy God ! what lyfe is this ?” quod
 she ;

“Allas ! ye sle me thus for verray tene !⁵
 I se wel now that ye mystrusten me,
 For by youre wordes it is wel yseene :
 Now for the love of Cynthia ⁶ the sheene,
 Mystruste me noght thus causeles for routhe,
 Syn to be trew I have yow plyght my trouth ;

“And thynketh wel, that somtyme it is wit
 To spende a tyme, a tyme for to wyne ; 1612
 Ne, *parde*, lorne am I noght fro yow yit,
 Thogh that we ben a day or tweye atwynne :
 Dryfe oute the fantasies yow withinne,

¹ The Moon. ² Aries. ³ Thought, *i. e.*, doubt. ⁴ Me assail
 Grief. ⁶ Diana (another name for Lucina).

And trusteth me, and leveth ek youre sorwe,
Or here my trouthe, I wol noght lyve tyl
morwe.

"For if ye wist how soore it doth me smerte,
Ye wolde ceese of this · for God, thow woste !
The pure ¹ spirit wepeth in myn herte 1620
To se yow wepen which that I love moost,
And that I moot ² gon to the Grekes ost ;
Ye ! nere it that I wiste a remedye
To com ageyn, right here I wolde dye.

"But certes I am noght so nyce ³ a wight,
That I ne kan ymagynen a way
To come ageyn, that day that I have hight ; ⁴
For who may holde a thyng that wol away ?
My fader noght, for al his queynte pleye ;
And, by my thrifte, my wendynge out of Troye,
Another day, shal tourne us al to joye. 1631

"Forthi ⁵ with al myn herte I yow beseke,
If that yow liste don oght for my preyere,
And for that love whiche that I love yow eke,
That er that I [shall] departe fro yow here,
That of so goode a confort and a chere
I may yow sen, that ye may brynge at reste
Myn herte, whiche that is at poynte to breste.

"And, over all this, I preye yow," quod she
tho,

"Myn owen herte sothfaste suffisaunce, 1640
Syn I am thin alle hole withouten mo,
That, whil that I am absente, no plesaunce

¹ Very ² Must. ³ Ignorant ⁴ Promised. ⁵ Therefore.

Of other do me fro youre remembraunce ;
 For I am evere agast ; for-why ¹ men rede,
 That love is thyng ay ful of bysy drede.

“ For in this worlde ther lyveth lady noon,
 If that ye were untrewe, as God defende,
 That so betraysed were, or wo bygon,
 As I, that alle trouthe in yow entende : ²
 And douteles, if that Ich other wende, ³ 1650
 I nere but ded, and er ye cause fynde,
 For Goddes love, so beth me noght unkynde.”

To this answerde Troylus and seyde,
 “ Now God, to whom ther nys no cause ywrye,
 Me glad as wis ⁵ I nevere unto Cryseyde,
 Syn thilke day I saugh hire first with eye,
 Was fals, ne never shal tyl that I deye.
 At shorte wordes, wele ye may me leve, ⁶
 I kan no more, it shal be founde at preve.”

“ *Graunte mercy*, goode myn, ywis !” quod
 she, 1660

“ And blisful Venus lat me nevere sterve,
 Er I may stonde of plesaunce in degre
 To quyte ⁷ hym wel that so wele kan deserve :
 And whil that God my wit wol me conserve
 I shal so don ; so trewe I have yow founde,
 That ay honour to mewarde shal rebounde.

“ For trusteth wel that youre estat real, ⁸
 Ne veyn delite, nor oonely worthinesse
 Of yow in werre or tournay marcial,

¹ Because. ² Expect (Fr. *attendre*). ³ Thought otherwise. ⁴ Cor-
 red. ⁵ Gladden me as truly as. ⁶ Believe ⁷ Requite. ⁸ Regai.

Ne pomp, array, nobley,¹ or ek richesse, 1670
 Ne made me to rew on youre distresse,
 But moral vertu, grounded upon trowthe,
 That was the cause I firste hadde on yow
 routh.

“Eke gentil herte, and manhode that ye
 hadde,

And that ye hadde, as me thought, in despite
 Every thyng that souned ² in-to badde,
 As rudenesse, and poeplissh appetite,
 And that youre reson bridede youre delite,
 This made, aboven every creature, 1679
 That I was youre, and shal whil I may dure.

“And this may length of yeres nought fordo,
 Ne remuable fortune deface ;
 But Juppiter, that of his myght may do ⁸
 The sorwful to be glad, so geve us grace,
 Er nyghtes ten to meten in this place,
 So that it may youre herte and myn suffise !
 And fareth now wel, for tyme is that ye
 rise !”

And after that they longe ypleyned hadde,
 And ofte kyste, and streyte in armes folde,
 The day gan ryse, and Troylus hym cladde,
 And rewfulliche his lady gan byholde, 1691
 As he that felte dèthes cares colde,
 And to hire grace he gan hym recomaunde ;
 Wher ⁴ he was wo, this holde I no demaunde.

For mannes hed ymagynen ne kan,

¹ Noble birth ² Tended. Cause. ⁴ Whether. ⁵ Question

Ne entendement ¹ considere, ne tonge telle,
 The cruel peynes of this sorwful man, 1697
 That passen every tourment down in helle;
 For when he saugh that she ne myghte dwelle,
 Which that his soule out of his herte rente,
 Withouten more, out of the chaumber he wente.

FIFTH BOOK.

Aprochen gan the fatel destyne,
 That Joves hath in disposisioun,
 And to yow, angry Parcas,² sustren thre,
 Comitteth to don execucioun;
 For whiche Cryseyde most out of the tounne,
 And Troylus shal dwellen forth in pyne,
 Til Lachesis³ his thred no longer twyne.

The golde-tressed Phebus, heigh on lofte,
 Thries hadde alle, with his bemes clere,
 The snowes molte; and Zephirus as ofte 10
 Ybrought ageyn the tender leves grene,
 Syn that the sone of Ecuba the queene
 Bygan to love hire firste for whom his sorwe
 Was alle that she departe sholde a morwe.

Ful redy was at prime Dyomedes,
 Cryseyde unto the Grekes oste to lede;
 For sorwe of which she felt hire herte blede,
 As she that nyste what was best to rede;⁴
 And trewely, as men in bokes rede,

¹ Understanding. ² Parcae, the Fates. Cf. ii. 733; iv. 1208.
 The one of the Fates who spins the thread of life which Atropos
 cuts off. ⁴ Advise (as one in a dilemma).

Men wiste never womman han the care, 2c
Ne was so loth out of a toun to fare.

This Troylus, withouten reed or lore,
As man that hath his joyes ek forlore,
Was waytynge on his lady everemore,
As she that was sothfaste, crop and moore¹
Of al his lust or joyes here tofore.
But, Troylus, now farewell al thy joye !
For shaltow nevere se hire eft in Troye.

Soth is, that while he bode in this manere,
He gan his wo ful manly for to hyde. 30
That wel unnethes it sene was in his chere ;
But at the gate ther she sholde oute ryde,
With certeyn folk he hoved² hire tabide,
So wo bygon, al wolde he noght hym pleyne,
That on his hors unneth he sat for peyne.

For ire he quook, so gan his herte gnawe,
Whan Dyomede on horse gan him dresse,
And seyde unto hymself this ilke sawe :³
“Allas !” quod he, “thus foule a wrechede-
nesse !

Whi suffre Ich it ? whi nyl Ich it redresse ? 40
Were it not bet at oones for to dye,
Than everemore in langoure thus to crye ?

“Why nyl I make atones rich and pore
To have ynough to done or that she go ?
Whi nyl I brynge all Troie upon a rore ?
Whi nyl I slen this Dyomedes also ?

¹ Top and root. Mr. Skeat says that the word “more” is used now in England in this sense. ² Hovered. ³ Saying.

Whi nyl I rather with a man or two,
 Stele hire away? Whi wol I this endure?
 Whi nyl I holpen to myn owene cure?"

But whi he nolde don so fel a dede, 50
 That shal I seyn, and whi hym liste it spare;
 He hadde in herte alweyes a manere drede,
 Leste that Cryseyde, in rumour of this fare,
 Shold han ben slayn; lo! this was al **hise**
 care;

And elles certeyn, as I seyde yore,
 He hadde it done withouten wordes more.

Cryseyde when she redy was to ride,
 Ful sorwfully she sighte, and seyde, "Allas!"
 But forth she mot, for oght that may betide,
 And forth she rite ful sorwfully a pas;¹ 60
 Ther is non other remede in this cas.

What wonder is, thogh that hyre soore smerte,
 When she forgothe hire owen swete herte?

This Troylus, in gise of curteysie,
 With hauke on hond, and with an huge route
 Of knyghtes, rood and dide hyre compaynye,
 Passynge alle the valeye fer withoute;
 And ferther wold han riden out of doute
 Ful fayn, and wo was hym to gon so soone,
 But torne he moste, and it was eke to done. 70

And right with that was Antenor ycome
 Oute of the Grekes oste, and every wight
 Was of it glad, and seyde he was welcome;
 And Troylus, al nere his herte lighte,²

¹ At a walk. ² Although his heart was not light

He peyned hym with al his fulle myght
Hym to with-holde of wepyng at the leeste,
And Antenor he kyste, and made feeste.

And therwithal he most his leve take,
And caste his eye upon hire pitously,
And neer ¹ he rood, his cause for to make, 80
To take hire by the hond al sobrelly:
And Lorde! so she gan wepen tendrelly!
And he ful soft and sleighely gan hire seye,
“Now hold youre day, and do me not to dye.”

With that his curser turned he aboute,
With face pale, and unto Dyomede
No word he spak, ² ne non of al his route;
Of whiche the sone of Tideus ³ tooke hede,
As he that couthe moore than the crede ⁴
In swiche a craft, and by the reyne hire hente,
And Troylus to Troye homwarde he wente. 91
This Dyomede, that ledde hyre by the bridel,
When that he saugh the folk of Troye awaye,
Thoghte, “Al my laboure shal not been on
ydel,

If that I may, for somewhat shal I seye;
For at the werste, it may yit shorte oure weye;
I have herde seyde ek, tymes twyes twelve,
He is a fool that wol forgete hym-selve.”

But natheles, this thoughte he wel ynoghe
That “certeinliche I am aboute noghte, 100
If that I speke of love, or mak it togh; ⁵

¹ Nearer. ² Not so says Shakespeare. *Troilus and Cressida*.
act iv., sc. 4, ll. 111-141. ³ That is, Diomedes. ⁴ The first principles
of love). ⁵ Laborious.

And for that more acqueyntaunce ek of yow
 Have Ich had than another straunger wight,
 So fro this forth I preye yow, day and nyght,
 Comaundeth me, how sore that me smerte, 132
 To don al that may like unto youre herte ;

“And that ye me wolde as youre brother trete,
 And taketh noght my frendescheipe in dispit.
 And thogh youre sorwes ben for thynges grete,
 Not¹ I nat whi, but out of more respit,²
 Myn herte hath for tamende³ it grete delit ;
 And if I may youre harmes nat redresse,
 I am right sory for youre hevynesse. 140

“For though ye Trojans with us Grekes
 wroth

Han many a day ben, alwey yet, *parde* !
 O⁴ god of love, in soth, we serven both :
 And for the love of God ! my lady fre,
 Whom so ye hate, as beth not wroth with me ;
 For trewely ther kan no wight yow serve,
 That half so loth youre wrethe wolde disserve.

“And ner it that we been so neigh the tente
 Of Calkas, which that sen us bothe may,
 I wold of thys yow telle alle myn entente, 150
 But this enseled⁵ til another day.

Geve me youre honde, I am and shal ben ay,
 God helpe me so ! whil that my lif may dure,
 Youre owen, aboven every creature.

“Thus seyde I nevere or now to womman
 borne ;

¹ Know not. ² Respect. ³ To amead ⁴ One ⁵ Sealed up.

For God myn herte as wisly glade so ! ¹
 I lovede never womman here beforne,
 As paramoures, ne nevere shal no mo :
 And, for the love of God ! beth not my fo,
 Al kan I noght to yow, my lady deere, 160
 Compleyne aright, for I am yit to leere.

“ And wondreth noght, myne owen lady
 bryghte,
 Though that I speke of love to yow thus blyve ;
 For I have herde or this of many a wighte,
 Hath loved thyng he nevere saugh his lyve :
 Ek I am not of power for to stryve
 Agenis the god of love, but hym obeye
 I wol alwey, and mercy I yow preye.

“ Ther ben so worthy knyghtes in this place,
 And ye so faire, that everich of hem alle 170
 Wol peynen hym to stonden in youre grace ;
 But myght to me so faire a grace falle,
 That ye me for youre servaunt wolde calle,
 So lowely, ne so trewely yow serve
 Nyl non of hem, as I shal til I sterve.”

Cryseyde unto that purpos lite answerde,
 As she that was with sorwe oppressed so,
 That, in effect, she noght his tales herde
 But here and ther, now here a worde or two :
 Hire thoght hire sorwful herte braste a-two ;
 For when she gan hire fader fer espie, 181
 Wel neigh doun of hire hors she gan to sye.²

But natheles, she thonkede Dyomede,

¹ As truly gladden. ² Fall (O. E. *sigan*, to sink).

Of alle his travaile, and his goode chere,
And that hym liste his frendschip hyre to
bede ;¹

And she accepteth it in goode manere,
And wol do fayn that is hym lief and deere ;
And trusten hym she wolde, and wel she
myghte,
As seyde she, and from hire hors shalighte.

Her fader hath hire in his armes ynome,² 190
And twenty tyme he kyste his doughter swete,
And seyde, "O dere doughter myn, welcome!"
She seyde ek, she was fayn with hym to mete,
And stood forth muwet,³ mylde, and mansu-
ete.⁴

But here I leve hire with hire fader dwelle,
And forth I wol of Troylus yow telle.

To Troye is come this woful Troylus,
In sorwe aboven alle sorwes smerte ;
With felon look, and face dispitouse,
Tho sodeinly doun from his hors he sterte, 200
And thorgh his paleys, with a swollen herte,
To chaumbre he wente, — of nothyng took he
hede,

Ne non to hym dar speke o worde for drede.

And ther his sorwes, that he spared hadde,
He gaf an issue large, and "Deth!" he criede ;
And in hise throwes,⁵ frenetike and madde,
He curseth Jove, Apollo, and ek Cupide ;
He curseth Ceres, Bachus, and Cipride,⁶

¹ Offer. ² Taker. ³ Mute. ⁴ Gent'e. ⁵ Throes. ⁶ Venus.

His birthe, hymself, his fate, and ek Nature,
And, save his lady, every creature. 210

To bedde he goth, and weyleth ther and
torneth

In furie, as doth he Ixion¹ in helle ;
And in this wyse he neigh til day sojourneth,
But tho bigan his herte alite unswelle,
Thorgh teres, whiche that gonnen up to welle ,
And pitously he cryed upon Cryseyde,
And to hym-self right thus he spake and seyde.

“Where is myn owene lady, lief and deere ?
Where is hire white breste, where is it, where ?
Where ben hir armes, and hire eyen clere, 220
That yesternight this tyme with me were ?
Now may I wepe allone many a tere,
And graspe aboute I may, but in this place,
Save a pilow, I fynde noght tembrace.

“How shal I don ? when shal she com agein ?
I not allas ! whi lete Ich hire to go ?
As wolde God Ich hadde as tho ben sleyne !
O herte myn Cryseyde ! O swete fo !
O lady myn ! that I love and namo,
To whom for evere mo myn herte I dowe,² 230
Se how I dye ! ye nyl me not rescowe.

“Who seth yow now, my righte lode-sterre ?
Who sit right now or stante in youre presence ?
Who kan conforten nowe youre hertes werre ?
Now I am gon, whom geve ye audiens ?

¹ Ixion was bound to a revolving wheel of fire. ² Give (Fr. *douer* to endow ; cf. “dower”).

Who speketh for me right now in my absens?
 Allas! no wight; and that is al my care,
 For wel woot I as yvel as I ye fare.

"How shold I thus ten dayes fulle endure
 When I the firste nyght have al this tene?¹ 240
 How shal she don ek, sorwful creature?
 For tendrenesse, how shal she thus sustene
 Swiche wo for me? O, pitous, pale, and grene
 Shal ben youre fresche wommanliche face,
 For langour, er ye torne unto this place."

And when he fille in any sloumberynge,
 Anon bygynne he sholde for to grone,
 And dremen of the dredefulleste thynges
 That myghte ben: as, mete² he were allone
 In place horrible, makynge ay his mone; 250
 Or meten that he was amanges alle
 His enemys, and in hire honde falle.

And therwithalle his body sholde sterte,
 And with the sterte alle sodeynliche awake;
 And swiche a tremour fele aboute his herte,
 That of the fere his body sholden quake:
 And therwithal he sholde a noyse make,
 And seme as thogh he sholde falle depe,
 From heigh of loft, and than he wolde wepe,

And rewen on hymself so pitously, 260
 That wonder was to here hise fantasye.
 Another tyme he sholde myghtely
 Conforte hymself, and seine it was folie,
 So causeles, swiche drede for to drye;³

¹ Grief. ² (He) dreamt. ³ Suffer.

And eft bygynne his aspre¹ sorwes newe,
That every man myghte on his sorwes rewe.

Who koude telle arighte, or ful discryve
His wo, his pleynt, his langoure, and his pyne
Noght al the men that han or ben on lyve ;
Thow redere maist thi-self fulle wele devyne,
That swich a wo my wit kan not defyne ; 271
On ydel for to write it shold I swynke,²
When that my wit is wery it to thynke.

On hevne yet the sterres weren seene,
Although ful pale ywoven was the moone ;
And whiten gan the orisounte sheene
Al esterwarde, as it wonte is to done ;
And Phebus, with his rosi carte, soone
Gan efter that to dresse hym up to fare,³
When Troylus hath sente efter Pandare. 280

This Pandare, that of al the day byforne
Ne myght han comen Troylus to see,
Althogh he on his hed it hadde sworne ;
For with the kynge Priam alday was he,
So that it lay noght in his liberte
Nowher to gon ; but on the morwe he wente
To Troylus, when that he for hym sente.

For in his herte he koude wel devyne,
That Troylus al nyght for sorw wooke,
And that he wolde telle hym of his pyne ; 290
This knew he wele ynogh withouten booke ;
For which to chaumbre streight the wey he
tooke,

¹ Rough. ² Labor. ³ Go.

And Troylus tho sobrelich he grette,
And on the bed ful soone he gan hym sette.

“ My Pandarus,” quod Troylus, “ the sorwe
Which that I drye,¹ I may not longe endure ;
I trow I shal not lyven til to morwe ;
For whiche I wolde always, on aventure,
To the devysen of my sepulture
The fourme, and of my moble² thow dispone
Right as the semeth best is for to done. 301

“ But of the fir and flaumbe funeral,
In which my body brennen shal to glede,³
And of the feste and pleyes palestral⁴
At my vigile, I preye the take gode hede
That that be wel : and offre Mars my stede,
My swerd, my helme : and, leeve brother deere,
My shelde to Palas⁵ gef, that shyneth clere.

“ The poudre in which myn herte ybrend shal
turne,
That preye I the thow tak, and it conserve 310
In a vesselle, that men clepeth an urne,
Of gold ; and to my lady that I serve,
For love of whom thus pitouslyche I sterve,
So geve it hire ; and do me this plesaunce,
To preyen hire kepe it for a remembraunce,

“ For wel I tele by my maladye,
And by my dremes now and yoore ago,
Al certainly that I mot nedes dye :
The owle ek, which that hette Ascalapho,⁶

¹ Suffer. ² Chattels (Fr. *meubles*). ³ Coals. ⁴ Wrestling game. ⁵ Minerva. ⁶ Ascalaphus, turned into an owl. Ovid *Metamorphoses*, v. 540.

Hath efter me shrigh al this nyghtes two, 320
 And god Mercurie! of me now, woful wreche,
 The soule gide, and when the list it fecche."

Pandare answerde and seyde, "Troylus,
 My deere frende, as I have told the yoore,
 That it is folie for to sorwen thus,
 And causeles, for whiche I kan namore;
 But who so wol nat trowen rede ne lore,¹
 I kan not sen in hym no remedie,
 But lat hym worchen with his fantasie.

"But, Troylus, I preye the telle me nowe,
 If that thou trowe er this that any wight 331
 Hath loved paramours as wel as thou?
 Ye, God woot! and fro many a worthy knyght
 Hath his lady gon, ye, a fourtenyghte,
 And he not yit made halvendel the care;
 What nede is the to maken alle this fare?

"Syn day by day thou maist thy-selven see
 That from his love, or elles from his wyf,
 A man mot twynnen of necessite,
 Ye, thogh he love hire as his owen life; 340
 Yet nyl he with hymself thus make stryfe;
 For wel thou woost, my leve brother deere,
 That alwey frendes may not ben yfeere.

"How don this folk that seen hire loves
 wedded
 By frendes myght,² as it bitit³ ful ofte,
 And sen hem in hire spouses bed ybedded?
 God woot, they take it wysely, faire, and soft;

¹ Trust counsel nor doctrine. ² Constraint. ³ Betideth.

For-whi¹ goode hope halt up hire herte oloft ;
 And for they kan a tyme of sorwe endure,
 As tyme hem hurt, a tyme doth hem cure. 350

“So sholdestow endure, and .aten slyde
 The tyme, and fonde² to be glad and light ;
 Ten dayes nys so longe noght tabide ;
 And syn she the to comen hath behight,
 She nyl hire heste breken for no wight ;
 For drede the noght, that she nyl finden weye
 To come agein, my lif that dorst I leye.

“Thy swevenes³ ek, and alle swich fantasie,
 Dryve oute, and late hem faren to myschaunce ;
 For they procede of thy malencolye,⁴ 360
 That doth the feele in slepe al this penaunce :
 A straw for alle swevenes signifaunce !
 God help me so, I counte hem noght a bene,
 Ther wot no man aright what dremes mene.

“For prestes of the temple tellen this,
 That dremes ben the revelaciouns
 Of goddes ; and as wel they telle ywis,
 That they ben infernals illusiouns.
 And leches⁵ seyn that of complexiouns⁶
 Proceden they, or fast, or glotonye ; 370
 Who woot in-soth thus what they signifie ?

“Ek oother seyn, that thorgh impressiouns, —
 As if a wight hath fast a thyng in mynde, —
 That therof cometh swiche avisiouns :
 And oother seyne, as they in bokes fynde,

¹ Because. ² Try. ³ Visions. ⁴ Literally, black bile. ⁵ Physicians. ⁶ Bodily temperament.

That efter tymes of the yere, by kynde,¹
Men dreme, and that theeffect goth by the
Moone ;

But leve² no dremen, for it is noght to done.

“ Wel worth³ of dremes ay this olde wyves,
And, treweliche, ek augurye of thise foweles,⁴
For fere of which men wenen leese hire lyves,
As ravenes qualm, or schrychyng of thise
owlis, 382

To trowen on it, bothe fals and foul is ;

Allas, alas, so noble a creature

As is a man, shal dreden swich ordure !⁵

“ For which with al myn herte I the beseeche,
Unto thi-self that alle this thow forgive ;
And ryse now up, withouten more speche,
And lat us cast how forth may best be dryve
This tyme ; and ek how fresshly⁶ we may lyve,
When that she cometh, the whiche shal be right
soone ; 391

God help me so ! thy best is thus to doone.

“ Ris, lat us speke of lusty lif in Troye
That we han led, and forth the tyme dryve,
And ek of tyme comynge us rejoye,
That bryngen shal oure blisse now so blive ;
And langour of this twye dayes fyve⁷
We shal therwith so forgete or oppresse,⁸
That wel unneth⁹ it don shal us duresse.

“ This town is ful of lordes al aboute, 400

¹ Naturally. ² Believe. ³ Well value. ⁴ That is, by observing the flight of birds. ⁵ Foulness. ⁶ Gayly, friskily. ⁷ Twice five days. ⁸ Subdue. ⁹ Scarcely.

And trewes lasten al this mene-whyle ;
Go we [and] pleye us in som lusty route,
To Sarpedon,¹ not hennes but a myle ;
And thus thow shalt the tyme wel bygile,
And dryve it forth unto that blisful morwe,
That thow hire se, that cause is of thi sorwe.

“ Now ris, my dere brother Troylus ;
For certes it non honour is to the
To wepe, and in thy bed to jouken ² thus ;
For treweliche of o thyng trust to me, — 410
If thow thus ligge, a day, or two, or thre,
The folk wol wene that thow for cowardyse
The feynest sik, and that thow darst not rise.”

This Troylus answerde, “ O brother deere !
This knowen folk that han ysuffred peyne,
That though he wepe, and make sorwful cheere
That feeleth harm and smert in every veyne,
No wonder is ; and thogh Ich evere pleyne,
Or alwey wepe, I nam nothyng to blame,
Syn I have lost the cause of al my game. 420

“ But syn of fyne ³ force I moot aryse,
I shal aryse, as soone as ever I may ;
And God, to whom myn herte I sacrificise,
So send us hastely the tenthe day ;
For was ther nevere fowl so fayn of May
As I shal ben, when that she cometh in Troye,
That cause is of my tormente and my joye.

“ But whider is thi reed,” ⁴ quod Troylus,

¹ A Lycian prince, afterwards slain by Patroclus. ² Doze, a term of falconry. ³ Finally. ⁴ Counsel.

“That we may pleye us best in al this toun?”
 “By God, my conseile is,” quod Pandarus,
 “To ryde and pleyen us with kynge Sarpe
 doun.” 431

So longe of this they speken up and doun,
 Til Troylus gan at the last to assente
 To ryse, and forth to Sarpedon they wente.

This Sarpedoun, as he that honourable
 Was evere hys lyve, and ful of heigh prowesse,
 With al that myght yserved ben on table,
 That deynte was, al cost it grete rychesse,
 He fed hem day by day; that swich noblesse,
 As seyden bothe the meest and ek the leste,
 Was nevere er that day wiste at any feeste. 441

Nor in this world ther is noon instrumente
 Delicious, thorgh wynde, or touch on corde,
 As fer as any wight hath ever wente,
 That tonge telle, or herte may recorde,
 But at that feste it nas wel herd acorde;
 Nof ladyes ek so faire a compaignye
 On daunce, er tho, was nevere yseyn with eye.

But what availleth this to Troylus,
 That for his sorwe nothyng of it roghte, 450
 But evere in oon, as herte pietus,
 Ful bisily Cryseyde his lady soghte?
 On hire was evere al that his herte thoghte,
 Now this, now that, so faste ymagynynge,
 That glad, ywis, kan hym no feestynge.

Thise laydyes ek that at this feeste ben,
 Syn that he saugh his lady was aweye,

It was his sorwe up-on hem for to sen,
 Or for to here on instrumentz so pleye ;
 For she that of his herte bereth the keye, 460
 Was absente, lo ! this was his fantasie,
 That no wight sholde maken melodye.

Nor ther nas houre in al the day or nyghte,
 When he was ther as no man myght hym here,
 That he ne seyde, " O lufsom lady bryghte,
 How have ye faren syn that ye were here ?
 Welcom, ywys, myn owen lady deere !"
 But, walaway ! al this nas but a maze,
 Fortune his howve entended bet to glaze.¹

The lettres ek that she of olde tyme 470
 Hadde hym ysente, he wold allone rede
 An hondreth sythe attwexen none and prime,²
 Refigurynge hire shap, hire wommanhede,
 Withinne his herte, and every worde or dede
 That passed was ; and thus he droofe tan³ ende
 The ferthe day, and seyde he wolde wende.

And seyde, " Leve brother Pandarus,
 Intendestow that we shal here bileve,⁴
 Til Sarpedon wol forth congeyen⁵ us ?
 Yet were it fayrer that we toke oure leve : 480
 For Goddes love, lat us now soone at eve
 Oure leve take, and homwarde lat us torne ;
 For trewely I nyl not thus sojorne."

Pandare answerde, " Be we comen hyder
 To feechen fir and rennen hom agein ?

¹ Intended to delude him still more. Cf. *Canterbury Tales*, ll 186, 3143, 7984. ² Between noon and the next morning. ³ To as
 Remain. ⁵ Give us our *congé* (permission to depart).

God help me so ! I kan nat tellen whider
 We myghte goon, if I shal sothely seyn,
 Ther any wight is of us moore feyn¹
 Than Sarpedon ; and if we hennes hye
 Thus sodeynly, I holde it vilenye.² 490

“ Syn that we seyden that we wolde bleve
 With hym a wowke, and now thus sodeynly
 The ferthe day to take of hym oure leve,
 He wolde wondren on it trewely :
 Lat us holden forth oure purpos fermely ;
 And sen that ye byhighten³ hym to bide,
 Holde forward⁴ now, and efter lat us ride.”

This Pandarus, with alle peyne and wo,
 Made hym to dwelle ; and at the wekes end,
 Of Sarpedon they tok hire leve tho, 500
 And on hire weye they spedden hem to wende.
 Quod Troylus, “ Now, Lorde, me grace sende,
 That I may fynden at myn home comynge
 Cryseyde comen ! ” and therwith gan he synge.

“ Ye, hasil-wode ! ”⁵ thoghte this Pandare,
 And to hymself ful softly he seyde,
 “ God woot, refreyden⁶ may this hote fare,
 Er Calkas sende Troylus Cryseyde ! ”
 But natheles he japede thus and seyde,
 And swor, ywis, his herte hym wel bihighte, 510
 She wolde com as soone as evere she myghte.

When they unto the paleys were ycomen
 Of Troylus, they doun of hors alighte,

¹ Glad. ² Bad manners. ³ Promised. ⁴ Promise. ⁵ Nonsense
 of ih. 890: v. 1174. ⁶ Grow cool.

And to the chaumbre hire wey than han they
nomen ;

And into tyme that it gan to nyghte,¹
They spaken of Cryseyde, the lady brighte ;
And efter this, when that hem bothe leste,
They spedde hem fro the soper unto reste.

O morw, as soone as day bigan to clere,
This Troylus gan of his slepe to breyde,² 520
And to Pandare, his owen brother deere,
" For love of God," ful pitously he preyede,
" As go we sene the paleys of Cryseyde ;
For syn we yit may have namoore feeste,
So lat us seen hire paleys at the leste."

And therwithalle, his meynye for to blende,³
A cause he fonde in towne for to go,
And to Cryseydes hous they gonnen wende ;
But Lorde ! this cely Troylus was wo !
Hym thoght his sorwful herte braste atwo ; 530
For when he saugh hire dorres spered ⁴ alle,
Well neigh for sorwe adoun he gan to falle.

Therwith, when he was ware, and gan bi-
holde
How shet was every wyndow of the place,
As frost hym thoghte his herte gan to colde ;
For which, with chaunged deedlich pale face,
Withouten word, he forth bygan to pace ;⁵
And as God wolde he gan so faste ryde,
That no wight of his contenaunce espiede.

¹ Night approached
fastened. ⁵ Pass.

² Awaken.

³ To blind his household

Than seyde he thus : “ O paleys desolat !
 O hous of housses, whilom beste yhight ! 54
 O paleys empti and disconsolat !
 O thow lanterne, of which queynte is the light !
 O payleys, whilom day, that now ert nyght !
 Wel oghtestow to falle, and I to dye,
 Syn she is wente that wonte was us to gye.

“ O paleys, whilom crowne of houses alle,
 Enlumyned with sonne of alle blisse !
 O ryng, fro which the ruby is out falle !
 O cause of wo, that cause has been of blisse !
 Yit syn I may no bet, fayn wold I kysse 55
 Thi colde dores, dorst I for this route ;
 And farewel, shryne, of which the seint is oute !”

Therwith he caste on Pandarus his ye,
 With chaunged face, and pitous to beholde ;
 And when he myght his tyme aright espie,
 Ay as he rode, to Pandarus he tolde
 His newe sorwe, and ek his joyes olde,
 So pitously, and with so dede an hewe, 559
 That every wight myght on his sorwes rewe.

Fro thennes-forth he rydeth up and down,
 And every thyng com hym to remembraunce,
 As he rode forth by the places of the town,
 In which he whilom had alle his plesaunce :
 “ Lo ! yonder saugh I myn owen lady daunce .
 And in that temple, with hire eyen clere,
 Me caughte firste my righte lady deere ;

“ And yonder have I herd ful lustili
 My deere herte laugh ; and yonder pleye

Saugh Ich hire oones ek ful blisfully ; 570
 And yonder oones to me gan she seye,
 ‘Now, goode swete ! love me wel, I preye ;’
 And yonder so gladly gan she me beholde,
 That to the deth myn herte is to hir holde.

“And at that corner in the yonder house,
 Herde I myn alderlevest lady deere,
 So wommanly, with vois melodyous,
 Syngen so wel, so goodely and so clere,
 That in my soule yit me thynketh Ich here
 The blisful soun ; and in that yonder place 580
 My lady first me tooke unto hire grace.”

Than thought he thus, “O blisful lord Cupide !

When I the processe have in memorye,
 How thow me hast weryed¹ on every syde,
 Men myght a book mak of it lyk a story !
 What nede is thee to seke on me victorie,
 Syn I am thyn, and holly at thy wille?
 What joye hastow thyn owene folk to spille?²

“Wel hastow, lord, ywroke on me thyn ire,
 Thow myghty god ! and dredeful for to greve !
 Now mercy, god ! thow woost wel I desire 591
 Thy grace moost, of alle lustes leeve !
 And lyve and dye I wol in thi beleve ;
 For which I naxe³ in guerdon but a boone,
 That thow Cryseyde agein me sende soone.

“Destreyne hire herte as faste to retourne,
 As thow doost myn to longen hire to see ;

¹ Warred. ² Ruin. ³ Ask not

Than woot I wel that she nyl noght sojourne :
 Now, blisful lorde ! so cruwel thow ne be
 Unto the blode of Troye, I preye the, 600
 As Juno was unto the blode Thebane,
 For which the folk of Thebes caught hire
 bane."

And after this he to the gates wente,
 Ther as Cryseyde oute rode a ful goode pas,
 And up and doun ther made he many a wente,¹
 And to himself ful oft he seyde, "Allas !
 Fro hennes rod my blisse and my solas !
 As wolde blisful God now for his joye,
 I myght hire seen agein com into Troye !

"And to the yonder hille I gan hire gyde ;
 Allas ! and ther I took of hire my leeve ; 611
 And yonde I saugh hire to hire fader ryde,
 For sorwe of which myn herte shal to-cleve ;²
 And hider hom I com when it was eve ;
 And here I dwelle, out-cast from alle joye,
 And shal, til I may seen her eft in Troye."

And of hym-self ymagyned he ofte,
 To be defet,³ and pale, and waxen lesse
 Than he was wont, and that men seyde softe,
 "What may it be ? who kan the sothe gesse,
 Why Troylus hath alle this hevynesse ?" 62
 And al this nas but his melencolye,
 That he hadde of hym-self swich fantasye.

Another tyme ymagynen he wolde,
 That every wyght that wente by the weye

¹ Turn. ² Cleave asunder. ³ Wasted.

Hadde of him routhe, and that they seyne
sholde,

“I am right sory, Troylus wol deye.”

And thus he drof a day yit forth or tweye,
As ye han herde ; swich lyf right gan he lede,
As he that stood bitwixen hope and drede. 630

For which hym liked in his songes shewe
Thencheson ¹ of his wo, as he best myghte,
And made a song of wordes but a fewe,
Somwhat his woful herte for to lighte :
And when he was from every mannes sighte,
With softe vois, he of his lady deere,
That absent was, gan synge as ye may here.

*“ O sterre, of which I lost have alle the lighte,
With herte soore, wel oughte I to bewaylle,
That evere derk in tormente, nyght by nyght 640
Towarde my deth, with wynde in steere I saylle ;
For whiche the tenthe nyght if that I faile ²
The gidyng of thi bemes bright an houre,
My ship and me Caribdes wol devour.”*

This song when he thus songen hadde soone
He fel agein into his sikes ³ olde ;
And every nyght, as was his wone ⁴ to doone,
He stood, the bryghte mone to beholde ;
And al his sorwe he to the moone tolde,
And seyde, “Iwis, when thow ert horned newe
I shal be glad, if alle the world be trewe. 651

“I saugh thyne hornes old ek by the morwe,
Whan hennes rode my righte lady deere,

¹ The occasion. ² Lack ³ S'ghs. ⁴ Wont.

That cause is of my torment and my sorwe ;
 For which, O bryghte Lucina the cleere !
 For love of God ! renne fast aboute thy spere .
 For when thyne hornes newe gynnen sprynge,
 Than shal she come that may my blisse brynge.'

The day is moore, and longer evere nyght
 Than they ben wonte to be, hym thoghte tho ;
 And that the sonne wente his course unright,
 By longer weye than it was wonte to go ; 662
 And seyde, " Ywis, me dredeth everemo
 The sonnes sone, Pheton,¹ be on lyve,
 And that his fader carte amys he dryve."

Upon the walles fast ek wold he walke,
 And on the Grekes oost he wolde se ;
 And to hymself right thus he wolde talke:
 " Lo, yonder is myn owene lady free,
 Or elles yonder, ther the tentes bee, 670
 And thennes cometh this eyr that is so soote,²
 That in my soule I feele it doth me boote.

" And hardyly, this wynde, that moore and
 moore
 Thus stoundemele³ encresseth in my face,
 Is of my ladys depe sykes sore ;
 I preve it thus, for in noon nother place
 Of al this town, save oonly in this space,
 Feele I no wynde that souneth so lyke payne .
 It seith, ' Allas ! whi twynned be we tweyne ? ''

This longe tyme he dryveth forth right thus.

¹ Phaethon, son of Helios, whose disastrous enterprise is familiar

² Sweet. ³ Momently.

Till fully passed was the nynthe nyght ; 681
 And ay bysyde him was this Pandarus,
 That bisily dide al his fulle myght
 Hym to confort, and mak his herte light ;
 Gevyng hym hope alweye, the tenthe morwe
 That she shal come, and stenten al his sorwe.

Upon that other syde eke was Cryseyde
 With wommen few amange the Grekes stronge,
 For which ful oft a day, "Allas !" she seyde,
 "That I was borne! wel may myn herte longe
 After my deth, for now lyve I to longe ; 691
 Allas ! and I ne may it not amende,
 For now is wers than evere yit I wende.¹

"My fader nyl for nothyng do me grace
 To gon agein, for noght I kan hym queme ;²
 And if so be that I my terme pace,
 My Troylus shal in his herte deme
 That I am fals, and so it may wel seme.
 Thus shal Ich have unthonke on every syde ;
 That I was borne, so walawey the tyde ! 700

"And if that I me put in jupartye
 To stele away by nyghte, and it befalle
 That I be caught, I shal be hold a spye ;
 Or elles, lo ! — this drede I moost of alle, --
 If in the hondes of som wreche I falle,
 I nam but lost, al be myn herte trewe :
 Now, myghty God, thow on my sorwe rewe !

Ful pale ywoxen³ was hire brighte face,
 Her lymes lene, as she that al the day

¹ Thought. ² Please. ³ Grown.

Stood when she dorste, and loked on the place
 Ther she was borne, and she dwelte had ay,
 And al the nyght wepynge, alas ! she lay ; 712
 And thus, despeyred oute of alle cure,
 She ledde hire lyf, this woful creature.

Ful ofte a day she sighte ek for destresse,
 And in hire-self she wente ay pourtreynge
 Of Troylus the grete worthinesse,
 And alle his goodely wordes recordynge,
 Syn first the day hire love bigan to sprynge ;
 And thus she sette hire woful hert afire, 720
 Thorgh remembraunce of that she gan desire.

In al this world ther nys so cruwel herte,
 That hire hadde herd compleyne in hire sorwe,
 That nold han wopen for hire peynes smerte ;
 So tendrely she wepte, bothe eve and morwe,
 Hire nedede non teris for to borwe ;
 And this was yet the werste of al hyre payne,
 Ther was no wight to whom she dorst hire
 pleyne.

Ful rewfully she loked upon Troye, 729
 Byhelde the toures heigh, and ek the hallis ;
 "Allas !" quod she, "the plesaunce and the
 joye,

The which that now al tourned into galle is,
 Have Ich hadde oft withinne tho yonder wallis
 O Troylus, what dostow now ? " she seyde ;
 "Lord ! whether thow thynke yet upon Cry
 seyde !

"Allas ! I nadde ytrowed on youre lore,

And wente with yow, as ye me redde or¹ this,
 Thanne hadde I now not siked half so sore :
 Who myght han seyde that I hadde don amys,
 To stele away with swich oon as he is? 740
 But al to late cometh the latuarye,²
 When men the cors unto the grave carye.

"To late is now to speke of that matere, —
 Prudens, allas! oon of thyn eyen thre³
 Me lakked alwey, er that I com here :
 On tyme ypassed wel remembred me,
 And present tyme ek koude I wel ysee ;
 But future tyme, er I was in the snare,
 Koude I not sen ; that causeth now my caie.

"But natheles, bitide what bitide, 750
 I shal to morw at nyght, by est or weste,
 Out of this oost stele, on som maner side,
 And gon with Troylus, wher as hym leste ;
 This purpos wol I hold, and this is beste, —
 No fors of wikked tonges janglerye,
 For evere on love han wreches hadde envye ;

"For who so wole of every worde tak hede,
 Or rulen hym by every wightes wit,
 Ne shal he nevere thryven, out of drede ;
 For that that som men blamen evere yit, 760
 Loo! other maner folk comenden it ;
 And as for me, for alle swich variaunce,
 Felicite⁴ clepe I my suffisaunce.

¹ Counseled before. ² Electuary. Cf. *Canterbury Tales*, l. 426.
 The three eyes of Prudence are Remembrance, Perception, and
 Foresight, giving information of the past, present, and future. ⁴ The
 highest good. Cf. *Canterbury Tales*, l. 338.

"For which, withouten any wordes moo,
 To Troye I wol, as for conclusion."
 But, God it woot ! er fully monthes two,
 She was ful fer fro that entencioun !
 For bothe Troylus and Troyes toun
 Shal knotles ¹ thoroughout hire herte slyde,
 For she wol take a purpos for tabide. 77c

This Dyomede, of whom yow telle I gan,
 Goth now withinne hymself ay arguynge,
 With al the sleighte and alle that evere he kan,
 How he may best, with shortest tarynge,
 Into his net Cryseydes herte brynge ;
 To this entente he koude nevere fyne,²
 To fisshen hire he layde out hook and lyne.

But natheles, wel in his herte he thoghte,
 That she nas nat without a love in Troye,
 For nevere sithen he hire thennes broghte, 78c
 Ne koude he sen her laughe, or maken joye ;
 He nyst how best hire herte for tacoie,³
 But for tasaie, he seyde, " Noght it ne greveth,
 For he that noght nasayeth, noght nacheveth."

Yet sayde he to hymself upon a nyght,
 "Now am I noght a fool, that woot wel how
 Hire wo for love is of another wight,
 And hereupon to gon asaye hire nowe,
 I may wel wete it nyl not ben my prow ;⁴
 For wyse folk in bokes it expresse, 79c
 Men shal nought wowe ⁵ a wight in hevynesse.

¹ As a cord without knots. ² End. ³ To entrap (literally, to tame)
⁴ Profit. ⁵ Woo.

"But who-so myghte wynnen swich a floure
 From hym for whom she morneth nyght and day,
 He myghte seyn he were a conqueroure."
 And right anon, as he that bolde was ay,
 Thoght in his herte, "Happe how happe may,
 Al shold I dye, I wol hire herte seche ;
 I shal namore lesen ¹ but my speche."

This Dyomede, as bokes us declare,
 Was in his nedes prest and corageous, 800
 With stierne vois, and myghty lymes square,
 Hardy and testif, strong, and chivalrus
 Of dedes, like his fader Tydeus ; ²
 And som men seyn he was of tonge large,
 And heire he was of Calidoyne and Arge.

Cryseyde mene ³ was of hire stature,
 Therto of shap, of face, and ek of cheere,
 Ther myghte be no fairer creature ;
 And ofte tyme this was hire manere,
 To gon ytressed with hire heres clere 810
 Doun by hire coler, at hire bak byhynde,
 Which with a threde of gold she wolde bynde.

And, save hire browes joyneden ifeere,
 Ther nas no lakke in oght I kan espien ;
 But for to speken of hyre eyen clere,
 Loo ! trewely they writen that hire seyen,
 That Paradys stood formed in hire yen ;
 And with hire riche beaute everemore
 Strof love in hire, ay whiche of hem was moore.

She sobre was, ek symple, and wyse withalle,

¹ Lose. ² Tydeus was king of Calydon (near the modern site of Missolonghi) and husband of Deipyle of Argos. ³ Medium.

The best ynorissed ek that myghte be, 821
 And goodely of hire speche in general,
 Charytable, estatliche, lusty and free ;
 Ne neveremoo ne lakked hire pyte,
 Tendre herted, slidyng of corage ;¹
 But trewely I kan not telle hire age.

And Troylus wel woxen was in heichte,
 And complet formed by proporcioun,
 So wel that Kynde it noght amenden myghte ;
 Yong, fresshe, strong, and hardy as lyoun ; 835
 Trew eke as steele in ech condicioun ;
 On of the best enteched² creature,
 That is, or shal, while that the world may dure.

And, certainly, in story it is yfounde,
 That Troylus was nevere unto no wight,
 As in his tyme, in no degre secounde
 In daring do,³ that longeth to a knyghte ;
 Al myght a geaunt passen hym of myght,
 His herte ay with the firste and with the beste
 Stod paregal,⁴ to dure do that hym leste. 845

But for to tellen forth of Dyomede :
 It fel, that efter on that tenthe day
 Syn that Cryseyde out of the cite gede,
 'This Dyomede, as fresshe as braunche in May
 Com to the tente ther as Cryseyde lay,
 And feyned hym with Calkas han to doon ;
 But what he mente I shal yow tellen soone.

Cryseyde, at shorte wordes for to telle,
 Welcomed hym, and down by hire hym sette,

¹ Unstable of fancy. ² Endowed. ³ Deed. ⁴ Equal.

And he was ethe¹ ynogh to maken dwelle ; 85c
 And efter this, withouten longe lette,
 The spices and the wyn men forth hem fette,²
 And forth they speke of this and that yfeere,³
 As frendes don, of whiche som shal ye hère.

He gan firste fallen of the werre in speche
 Bytwyxen hem and the folk of Troye toun,
 And of thassege he gan ek hire beseche
 To tellen him what was hire opinyoun :
 Fro that demaunde he so descendeth doun
 To axen hire if that hire straunge thoghte 86o
 The Grekis gyse, and werkes that they wroghte ;

And whi hire fader tarieth so longe
 To wedden hire unto som worthy wighte ?
 Cryseyde, that was in hire peynes stronge,
 For love of Troylus, hire owene knyghte,
 Als ferforthe as she konnyng hadde or myght,
 Answerde hym tho ; but, as of his entente,
 It semede not she wiste what he mente.

But, natheles, this ilke Dyomede
 Gan in hymself assure, and thus he seyde : 87o
 “ If Ich arighte have taken of yow hede,
 Me thynketh thus, O lady myn Cryseyde !
 That, syn I firste hond on youre bridel layde,
 When ye out com of Troye by the morwe,
 Ne koude I nevere sen yow but in sorwe.

“ Kan I not seyn what may the cause be,
 But if for love of som Trojan it were ;
 The which right soore wolde athynken me,

¹ Easy. ² Fetch. Together.

That ye for any wighte that dwelleth there
 Sholden spille a quarter of a teere, 88a
 Or pitously youre-selven so bygile ;
 For dredeles it is noght worth the while.

“ The folk of Troye, as who seith alle and
 some,

In prison ben, as ye youre-selven see ;
 Fro thennes shal not oon on lyve come,
 For al the gold atwixen sonne and see ;
 Trusteth me ¹ wel, and understondeth me,
 Ther shal not oon to mercy gon on lyve,
 Al were he lord of worldes twyes fyve.

“ Swich wreche ² on hem for fecchyng of
 Eleyne 89a

Ther shal ben take, er that we hennes wende,
 That Manes, which that goddes ben of peyne,
 Shal ben agaste that ³ Grekes wol hem shende ;
 And men shul drede, unto the worldes ende
 From hennesforth, to ravysshyn any queene,
 So cruel shal our wreche on hem be seene.

“ And but-if Calkas lede us with ambages, ⁴
 That is to seyn, with dowble wordes slye,
 Swich as men clepe ‘ a worde with two visages,’
 Ye shal wel knowen that I noght ne lye, 90a
 And al this thyng right sen it with youre ye,
 And that anoon, ye nyl not trow how soone ;
 Now taketh hede, for it is for to doone.

“ What ! wene ye youre wyse fader wolde
 Have geven Antenor for yow anoon,

¹ Not in the MS. ² Vengeance. ³ For fear that. ⁴ Ambiguities

If he ne wiste that the cite sholde
 Destrued ben? Why, nay! So mot I gon!
 He knewe ful wel ther shal not scapen oon
 That Trojan is; and for the grete feere,
 He dorste not ye dwelte lenger there. 910

"What wol ye moore, lufsom lady deere?
 Lete Troye and Trojan fro youre herte pace;
 Dryve oute that bittre hope, and make goode
 chere,

And clepe agein the Beaute of youre face,
 That ye with salte teeris so deface,
 For Troye is brought in swich a jupartye,
 That it to save is now no remedye.

"And thenketh wel, ye shal in Grekes fynde
 A moore parfite love, or it be nyght,
 Thanne any Trojan is, and moore kynde, 920
 And bet to serven yow wol don his myght;
 And if ye vowchesaufe, my lady bryghte,
 I wol ben he to serven yow me-selve,
 Ye! levere than ben a lord of Grekes twelve."

And with that worde he gan to wexen rede,
 And in his speche a litel while he quooke,
 And caste aside a litel with his hed,
 And stynte a while; and efterwarde he wooke,
 And sobreliche on hire he threw his looke,
 And seyde, "I am, albeit to yow no joye, 930
 As gentil man as any wighte in Troie.

"For if my fader Tydeus," he seyde,
 'Ylived hadde, Ich hadde ben, or this,
 Of Calidoyne and Arge a kyng, Cryseyde;

And so hope I that I shal yit, ywys :
 But he was slayne, alas ! the moore harme is,
 Unhappilye at Thebes al to rathe,¹
 Polymyte,² and many a man to scathe !

“ But, herte myn ! syn that I am youre man,
 And ben the firste of whom I seche grace, 94c
 To serve yow as hertely as I kan,
 And evere shal, while I to lyve have space,
 So er that I departe out of this place,
 Ye wol me graunte that I may to morwe,
 At better leyser telle yow my sorwe.”

What sholde I telle hise wordes that he seyde ?
 He spake inogh for a day atte meeste ;³
 It preveth wel he spak so, that Cryseyde
 Graunted on the morwe at his requeste,
 For to speken with hym atte leste, 95c
 So that he nolde speke of swiche matere ;
 And thus she to hym seyde, as ye mow here,

As she that hadde hire herte on Troylus
 So faste, that ther may it noon arace ;⁴
 And straungely she spak and seyde thus :
 “ O Diomedes, I love that ilke place
 Ther I was borne ; and Joves, for his grace,
 Delyvere it soone of alle that doth it care !
 God, for thi myght so lene it wel to fare !

“ That Grekes wolde hire wrath on ‘Troye
 wreke, 96c
 If that they myght, I know it wel, ywis ;
 But it schal noght byfallen as ye speke ;

¹ Soon. ² Polyneices. ³ Most. ⁴ Tear away

And God toforne, and ferther over this,
I woot my fader wyse and redy is,
And that he me hath bought, as ye me tolde,
So deere I am the more unto hym holde.

"That Grekes ben of heigh condicioun,
I wot ek wel ; but certein men shal fynde
As worthy folk withinne Troye toun,
As konnynge, as parfite, and as kynde, 970
As ben betwyxen Orcades ¹ and Inde ;
And that ye koude wele your lady serve,
I trow ek wel hire thonke for to desserve.

"But as to speke of love, ywis," she seyde,
"I had a lord to whom I wedded was,
He whos myn herte al was til that he deyde ;
And other love, as help me now Pallas !
Ther in myn herte nys, ne nevere was ;
And that ye ben of noble and heigh kynrede,
I have wel herd it tellen, out of drede. 980

"And that doth me to han so grete a wonn-
der,
That ye wol scornen any womman so ;
Ek, God woot, love and I ben fer asonder ;
I am disposed bet, so mot I go,
Unto my deth to pleyne and maken wo ;
What I shal efter done I kan not seye,
But trewelich as yet me luste not pleye.

"Myn herte is now in tribulacioun,
And ye in armes bysi day by day ;
Here-efter, whan ye wonnen han the toun, 990

¹ Latin name of the Orkney Islands.

Paraunter thanne, so it happen may,
That when I se that I nevere er sey,
Thanne wol I werke that I never er wroghte ;
This word to yow ynogh suffisen oghte.

“ To morwe eke wol I speke with yow fayne,
So that ye touchen noght of this matere ;
And when yow luste, ye may com here ageyne,
And er ye gon, thus muche I seye yow here :
As helpe me Pallas, with hire heres clere,
If that I sholde of any Greke han routhe, 1000
It sholde be youre-selven, be my trouthe !

“ I say not therfore that I wol yow love,
Ny¹ say not nay ; but, in conclusioun,
I mene wele, by God that sitt above ! ”
And therwithal she caste hire eyen down,
And gan to syke, and seyde, “ O Troye town !
Yet bid I God, in quiete and in reste
I may yow sen, or do myn herte breste ! ”

But in effect, and shortly for to seye,
This Diomede alle fresshly newe agein 1010
Gan presen on, and fast hire mercy preye ;
And efter this, the sothe for to seyne,
Hire glove he toke, of whiche he was ful fayne
And, finaly, when it was woxen eve,
And alle was wel, he roos and tooke his leve.

The brighte Venus folwed and ay taughte
The wey ther brode Phebus doun alighte ;
And Cynthea² hire char hors over raughte,
To whirle out of the Leon,³ if she myghte ;

¹ Nor I. ² The Moon. ³ The sign Leo.

And Signifer ¹ his candels sheweth brighte,
When that Cryseyde unto hire bedde wente,
In-with hire fadres faire, bryghte tente. 1022

Retournynge ² in hir soule ay up and doun
The wordes of this sodeyn Diomede,
His grete estate, and peril of the town,
And that she was allon, and hadde nede
Of frendes help ; and thus bygan to brede
The cause whi, the sothe for to telle,
That she tok fully the purpos for to dwelle.

The morwen com, and gostly for to speke,
This Diomede is com unto Cryseyde ; 1031
And shortly, leste that ye my tale breke,
So wel he for hymselfe spake and seyde,
That alle hire sykes soore adown he leyde ;
And finaly, the sothe for to seyne,
He refte hire of the grete ³ of al hire peyne.

And efter this, the storye telleth us,
That she him gaf the faire baye steede,
The whiche she ones wan of Troylus ;
And eke a broch (and that was litel nede) 1040
That Troylus was, she gaf this Diomede ;
And ek the bet ⁴ from sorw hym to releve,
She made hym were a pensel of ⁵ hire sleve.

I fynde ek in stories elleswhere,
When thorgh the body hirte was Dyomede
Of Troylus, tho wepte she many a teere,
When that she saugh hise wyde woundes blede,

¹ The Zodiac (literally, sign-bearer). ² Revolving. ³ The major part. ⁴ Better. ⁵ A pension made from.

And that she toke to kepen hym good hede,
 And for to helen hym of his sorwes smerte,
 Men seyn, I not, that she gaf hym hire herte.

But trewelyche, the storye telleth us, 105
 Ther made nevere womman more wo
 Than she, when that she falsede Troylus ;
 She seyde, "Allas ! for now is clene ago
 My name of trouthe in love for everemo ;
 For I have falsed oon the gentileste
 That evere was, and oon the worthyeste.

"Allas ! of me unto the worldes ende
 Shal neither ben ywriten nor ysonge
 No good worde, for this bokes wol me shende
 Yrolled shal I ben on many a tonge ; 1061
 Thorghout the world my belle schal be ronge ;
 And wommen most wol haten me of alle ;
 Allas ! that swich a cas me sholde falle !

"They wol seyn, in as muche as in me is,
 I have hem don dishonoure, walaway !
 Al be I not the firste that dide amys,
 What helpeth that to don my blame away ?
 But syn I se ther is no better way,
 And that to late is now for me to rewe, 1070
 To Dyomede algate I wol be trewe !

"But, Troylus, syn I no bettre may,
 And syn that thus departen ye and I,
 Vet preye I God so geve yow right good
 day ;¹

As for the gentileste, trewely,

¹ That is, good fortune. (Fr. *bonheur*.) Cf. v. 1411.

That evere I say,¹ to serven faithfully,
 And beste kan ay his lady honour kepe," —
 And with that word she braste anon to wepe.

"And certes, yow to haten shal I nevere,
 And frendes love, that shal ye han of me, 1080
 And my goode worde, al shold I lyve evere;
 And trewely I wol right sory be,
 For to seen yow in swich² adversite;
 And giltelees I wot wel I yow leeve,³
 And alle shal passe, and thus tak I my leve."

But trewely how longe it was betweyne,
 That she forsoke hym for this Dyomede,
 Ther is non auctour telleth it, I wene;
 Tak every man now to his bokes hede,
 He shal no time fynden, out of drede; 1090
 For thogh that he bigan to wow⁴ hire soone,
 Er he hire wan, yet was there more to doone.

Ne me ne list this sely⁵ womman chyre
 Ferther thanne the storie wol devyse;
 Hire name, alas! is publyshed so wyde,
 That for hire gilte it oghte ynogh suffise;
 And if I myght excuse hire any wyse,
 For she so sory was for hire untrouthe,
 Ywis I wold excuse hire yet for routh.

This Troylus, as I before have tolde, 1100
 Thus dryveth forth as wel as he hathe myght;
 But ofte was his herte hote and colde,
 And namely that ilke nynthe nyght,
 Whiche on the morwe she hadde hym byhight

Saw. ² Not in MS. ³ Believe. ⁴ Woo. ⁵ Simple

To com ageyn. God woot, ful litel reste
Hadde he that nyght! nothyng to slepe hym
leste.

The laurer-crowned Phebus, with his hete,
Gan in his course, ay upwarde as he wente,
To warmen of the este se the wawes wete,
And Nysus doughter ¹ song, with fressh entente,
When Troylus his Pandare efter sente; 1111
And on the walles of the town thei pleyde,
To loke if they kan sen oght of Cryseyde.

Til it was none they stode for to se
Who that ther come, and every manere wight
That com fro fer, they seyden it was she,
Til that thei koude knowen hym aright:
Now was his herte dul, now was it light,
And thus bijaped stonden for to stare,
Aboute noght, this Troylus and Pandare. 1120

To Pandarus this Troylus tho seyde,
“For oght I woot, byfor noon sykerly,
Into this town ne cometh not here Cryseyde;
She hath ynough to doen, hardily,
To wynnen ² from hire fader, so trow I.
Hire olde fader wol yet make hire dyne
Er that she go, God geve his herte pyne!”

Pandare answerde, “It may wel be certein,
And forthy lat us dyne, I the beseche,
And after noon than maistow com agein.” 1130
And hom they go, withouten moore speche,

¹ Scylla, daughter of Nisus, king of Megara, was turned into
ark. For the other Scylla, see *Parlement of Foules*, l. 292. ² Ge

And comen agein ; but longe may they seche,
 Er that thei fynde that they efter gape ;
 Fortune hem bothe thenketh for to jape.¹

Quod Troylus, " I se wel now that she
 Is taried with hire olde fader so,
 That, er she come, it wol neigh even be.
 Come forth, I wol unto the gate go ;
 Thise portours ben unkonnyng everemo,
 And I wol done hem holden up the gate, 1140
 As noght ne were,² althogh she come late."

The day goth fast, and efter that cometh eve,
 And yet com noght to Troylus Cryseyde ;
 He loketh forth by hegge, by tre, by greve,
 And fer his hed over the walle he layde,
 And at the laste he torned hym, and seyde,
 " By God, I wot hire menyinge now, Pandare !
 Almoost iwys al newe is my care !

" Now, douteles, this lady kan hire good ;
 I wote she meneth riden prively ; 1150
 I comende hire wysdom, by myn hode !
 She wol not maken peple nycely³
 Gaure⁴ on hire when that she comth ; but
 softly

By nyght into the town she thenketh ride,
 And, dere brother, thenke not longe tabide,

" We han noght elles for to don, iwys ;
 And, Pandarus, now woltow trowen me ?
 Have here my trouthe, I se hire ! yonde she is !
 Heve up thyn eyen, man, maystow not se ?"

¹ Cf. v. 460. ² As if it signified nought. ³ Foolishly. ⁴ Gaze.

Pandare answerde, "Nay, so moot I the!¹ 1160
Al wronge, by God! what seistow, man? wher
arte?

That I se yonde is but a fare carte."

"Allas! thow saist right soth," quod Troylus;
"But hardely it is not al for noght,
That in myn herte I now rejoyssse thus,
It is agenis som good, I have a thoght;
Not² I not how, but sen³ that I was wroghte,
Ne felt I swich a confort, dar I seye; 1168
She comth to nyght, my life that dorste I leye!"⁴

Pandare answerd, "It may be wel ynough;"
And helde with hym of al that ever he seyde,
But in his herte he thoght, and softly lough,
And to hymself ful sobreliche he seyde,
"From hasel woode,⁵ ther Jolye Robin pleyde,
Shal com al that that thow abydest⁶ here!
And farewel al the snowgh of ferne⁷ yere!"

The wardeyn of the gates gan to calle
The folk which that withoute the gates were,
And bad hem dryven in hire bestes alle,
Or al the nyght they moste bleven⁸ there; 1180
And fer withinne the nyght, with many a teere
This Troylus gan homwarde for to ride,
For wel he seth it helpeth noght tabyde.

But natheles, he gladded hym in this,
He thoghte he mysaccounted hadde his day,
And seyde, "I understonde have al amys.

¹ Thrive. ² Know not. ³ Since. ⁴ Lay (wager). ⁵ Cf. v. 509
⁶ Awaitest. ⁷ Far (gone). ⁸ Remain.

For thilke nyght I laste Crysede seye,
 She seyde, 'I shal ben here, if that I may,
 Er that the moone, O deere herte swete,
 The Leon passe oute of this Ariete ;'¹ 1190

"For which she may yet holde al hire bi-
 heste."

And on the morwe unto the gate he wente,
 And up and down, by weste and ek bi este,
 Upon the walles made he many a wente,²
 But al for noght ; his hope alwey hym blente ;⁴
 For which at nyght, in sorwe and sikes sore,
 He wente hym home, withouten any moore.

This hope al clene out of his herte fledde,
 He hath whereon now lenger for to honge ;
 But, for the peyne, hym thoght his herte
 bledde, 1200

So were his throwes sharpe, and wonder
 stronge ;

For when he saugh that she aboode so longe,
 He nyste⁴ what he juggen of it myghte,
 Syn she hath broken that she hym byhighte.

The thridde, ferthe, fyfte, sexte day
 After tho dayes ten, of whiche I tolde,
 Betwixen hope and drede his herte lay,
 Yet somewhat trusten on hire hestes olde ;
 But when he saugh she nold hire terme no
 He kan now sen non other remedye, 1210
 But for to shape hym sone for to dye.

Therwith the wykked spirit, God us blesse !

¹ See iv. 1592. ² Turn. ³ Deceived. ⁴ Knew not.

And by this boor, fast in hir armes folde,
Lay kyssyng ay his lady bright Cryseyde ; 1241
For sorw of which, whan he it gan biholde,
And for despit, out of his slepe he breyde,¹
And loude he criede on Pandarus, and seyde,
"O Pandarus, now know I, crope and roote !²
I nam but ded, there is non other boote !

"My lady bryghte, Cryseyde, hath me by-
trayed,
In whom I trustede moost of any wighte ;
She elleswhere hath now hire herte apeyde ;³
The blisful goddes, thorgh hire grete myghte,
Han in my drem yshewed it ful righte ; 1251
Thus, in my drem, Cryseyde have I biholde ;"
And al this thyng to Pandarus he tolde.

"O my Cryseyde, alas ! what subtilte ?
What newe lust ? what Beaute ? what science ?
What wrathe of juste cause have ye to me ?
What guilte of me ? what fel experience
Hath fro me raft, alas ! thyn advertence ?
O trust, O feith, O depe aseuraunce ! 1259
Who hath me reft Cryseyde, al my plesaunce ?

"Allas ! whi lett I yow from hennes go ?
For which wel neigh out of my wit I breyde ;
Who shal now trowe on any othes moo ?
God woot I wende, O lady bright, Cryseyde.
That every word was gospel that ye seyde !
But who may beste bigile if hym liste,
Than he on whom men weneth best to triste ?

¹ Started. ² Cf. v. 25. ³ Satisfied.

“What shal I don, my Pandarus, allas?
I fele nowe so sharpe a newe peyne,
Syn that ther is no remedye in this cas, 1270
That bet were it I with myn hondes tweyne
My-selven slewe, than alway thus to pleyne;
For thorgh the deth my wo shold have an ende,
Ther every day with lif myself I shende.”

Pandare answerde and seyde, " Allas, the
while
That I was born ! have I not seyde or this
That dremes many a maner man bigile ?
And whi ? For folk expounden hem amys :
How darstow seyn that fals thy lady is, 1279
For any dreme, right for thyn owen drede ?
Lat be this thoght ; thow kanst no dremes rede.

“ Paraunter ther thow dremest of this boor,
It may so be that it may signifye
Hire fadir, whiche that old is and ek hoor,
Agein the sonne lyth o poynte to dye ;
And she for sorwe gynneth wepe and crye,
And kysseth hym, ther he lyth on the grounde ;
Thus sholdestow thy dreme aright expounde.”

“How myght I than don,” quod Troylus,
 “To know of this, ye, were it nevere so lite?”
 “Now seyestow wisely,” quod this Pandarus;
 “My rede is this, syn thow kanst wel endite,
 That hastily a letre thou hire write, 1293
 Thorgh whiche thow shalt wel bryngen it
 aboute

To knowe a soth of that thow ert in doute.

“ And se now why · for this I dar wel seyn,
That if so is, that she untrewē be,
I kan not trowen that she wol write agein ;
And if she write, thow shalt ful soone see,
As whether she hath any liberte 1300
To come agein, or elles in som clause,
If she be let, she wol asigne a cause.

“ Thow hast not writen hire syn that she
wente,
Nor sche to the ; and this I dorste laye,¹
Ther may swich cause ben in hire entente,
That hardily thow wolt thy-selven seye,
That hire abood ² the best is for yow tweye :
Now write hire than, and thow shalt fele soone
A sothe of al ; ther is namoore to doone.”

Acorded ben to this conclusion, 1310
And that anon, thise ilke lordes two ;
And hastily sit Troylus adoun,
And rolleth ³ in his herte to and fro,
How he may best descryven hire his wo ;
And to Cryseyde, his owen lady deere,
He wrote righte thus, and seyde as ye may
here.

The Copy of the Letter.

“ Right fresshe floure ! whos I ben have and
shal,
Withouten part of elleswhere servyse,

¹ Wager. ² Delay. ³ Revolveth.

Upon hys lady pitously compleyne,
 Than wene I that I oghte be that wyght ;
 Considered thys, that ye thys monethes tweyne
 Han taryed, there ye seyde, sothe to seyne,
 But dayes ten ye nolde in hoste sojourne ;
 But in two monethes yit ye not retourne. 1351

“And, for as moche as me mote nedys lyke
 Alle that you lust, I dar not pleyne more,
 But humbly, wyth sorowful sykes syke,¹
 You write I myn unresty sorowes sore ;
 Fro day to day, desiring evermore
 To knowen fully, gif youre wille it were,
 How ye han ferde and don while ye ben there.

“The whos welfare and hele eke God encrece
 In honour suche, that upward in degre 1360
 Hit grow alwey, soo that it never cese,
 Ryght as youre herte ay can, my lady fre,
 Devise, I prey to Gode so mote it be,
 And graunt it, soone that ye upon me rewe,
 As wisly² as in al I am unto you trewe.

“And yf it lyke yow knowen of the fare
 Of me, whos woo ther may no wyght discryve,
 I can no more, — but cheste³ of every care, —
 At wrytyng of thys letre I was on lyve,
 Al redy oute my wooful gost to dryve, 1370
 Whych I delay, and holde hym yit in honde,
 Upon the syght of matere of youre sonde.⁴

“Myn eyen twoo, in veyne wyth wych I see,
 Of sorowfule terys salte ar woxen welles ;

¹ Sighs sick. ² Truly. ³ Strife ⁴ Message, *i. e.*, response

My songe in pleynt of myn adversite,
 My good in harme, myn ese eke woxen helle is,
 My joye in wo ; I can sey you noght ellys,
 But tournede is — for wych my lyf I warye¹ —
 Every joye or ese in hys contrarie.

“ Whych with your comynyng hom agen to
 Troye 1380

Ye may redresse, and, more a thousand sithe
 Than ever I hade, encrecen in me joye ;
 For was ther never herte yit so blithe
 To have hys lyf, as I shal ben as swyth²
 As I you see ; and thogh no manere routhe
 Com in to you, yit thenkyth on youre trouthe.

“ And gef so be my gilt dethe have deserved,
 Or yf you lust no more upon me see,
 In guerdon yit of that I have you served,
 Beseche I you, myn owne lady free, 1390
 That herupon ye wolde write me,
 For love of Gode, my ryghte lodestere,
 That dethe may make an ende of al my were.

“ If other cause oght dothe you for to dwelle,
 Than with youre letre ye may me reconforte ;
 For thogh to me youre absence is an helle,
 Wyth pacience I wyl my woo conforte,
 And with youre letre of hope I wyl disporte.
 Now writeth, swete, and lat me thus not
 pleyne ;

Wyth hope, or dethe, delivereth me from peyne

“ Ywys, myn owne dere herte trewe, 1401

¹ For which I curse my life. ² Quickly.

I wote that whan ye next upon me se,
So lost have I myn hele and eke myn hewe,
Cryseyde shal not conne¹ knowe me ;
Ywis, myn hertes day, my lady fre,
Soo thrusteth ay myn herte to beholde
Your beaute, that unnethe my lyf I holde.

" I sey no more, al have I for to seye
To you wel more than I tellen may ;
But whether that ye do me lyve or deye, 1410
Yit prey I Gode so geve you ryght gode day ;²
And fareth wel, godely feyre, fresshe May,
As she that lyf or deth me may comaunde,
And to youre trouthe ay I me recomaunde.

" Wyth hele swych, but that ye given me
The same hele, I shal noon hele have ;
In you lieth, whan you list that it so be,
The day on whyche me clothen shal my grave ;
In you my lif, in youre myght for to save
Me fro disese of alle peynes smerte ; 1420
And fare now wele, myn owne swete herte !

" Le vostre T."

Thys letre forth was sent unto Cryseyde,
Of whych hir answer in effect was thys :
Ful pitously she wrote agen and seyde,
That al so sone as that she myght, ywys,³
She wolde come, and mende that was amys :
And finally, she wrote hym and seyde thanne,
She wolde come, ye, but she nyste whanne.

Be able. ² Good fortune. Cf. v. 774. (Fr. *bonheur*.) ³ Truly
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But in hire letre made she swich feeste, 1430
That wonder was, and swerth¹ she loveth hym
 beste,

Of which he fonde but botmeles biheste.²

But, Troylus, thou mayst now, est or weste,
Pipe in an ivy leef, if that the leste.

Thus goth the world, — God shilde us fro mes-
 chaunce,

And every wight that meneth trouthe avaunce!

 Encressen gan the wo fro day to nyght
Of Troylus, for tarynge of Cryseyde;
And lessen gan his hope and ek his myght,
For which al doun he in his bed hym leyde;
He ne ete, ne dronk, ne slepe, ne worde seyde,
Ymagynyng ay that she was unkynde, 1442
For which wel neigh he wex out of his mynde.

 This dreame, of which I tolde have ek biforne,
May nevere come out of his remembraunce;
He thought ay wel he had his lady lorne,
And that Joves, of his purveiaunce,
Hym shewed hadde in slepe the significaunce
Of hire untrouth, and his disaventure, 1449
And that the boor was shewed hym in figure.

 For which he for Sibille his suster sente,
That called was Cassandre al aboute,
And al his dreame he told hire or he stente,
And hire bysought assoylen hym the doute
Of the stronge boor, with tuskes stoute;
And finally, withinne a litel stounde,
Cassandre bygan right thus his dreame expounde

¹ Swaureth ² Baseless promise. ³ Cf. *Canterbury Tales*, l. 1838

She gan first smyle, and seyde, "Brother
dere,

If thow a soth of this desirest knowe,
'Thow most a fewe of olde stories here, 1460
To purpos how that fortune overthowe
Hath lordes olde, thorgh which withinne a
throwe
'Thow wel this boor shalt know, and of what
kynde

He comen is, as men in bokes fynde.

"Diane, which that wroth was and in ire,
For Grekes nolde don hire sacrificse,
Ne incens upon hire auter sette afire,
So for that Greekes gonne hire so despise,
Wrak¹ hir in a wonder cruwel wyse ;
For, with a boor, as grete as ox in stalle, 1470
She made up frete² hire corne and vynes alle.³

"To sle this boor was al the contre raysed,
Omanges which ther come this boor to se
A maide, on of this worlde the beste preysed ;
And Meleager, lorde of that contre,
He lovede so this fresshe mayden free,
That with his manhode, or he wolde stente,
This boor he slough, and hire the hed he sente.

"Of which, as olde bokes tellen us,
Ther roos a kontek⁴ and a grete envye ; 1480
And of this lorde descended Tideus⁵

¹ Revenged. ² Eat. ³ Æneus, King of Calydon, having neglected to sacrifice to Diana, a boar was sent to ravage his dominions. The monster was killed by Meleager, son of Æneus, who presented its head to Atalanta, his mistress, daughter of the King of Arcadia. *Metamorphoses*, viii. 261, etc. ⁴ Contest. ⁵ One of the heroes of the siege of Thebes.

By ligne, or elles olde bokes lye :
 And how this Meleager gan to dye
 Thorwgh his moder, wol I yow noght telle,
 For al to long it were for to dwelle."

She told ek how Tideus, or she stente,
 Unto the stronge cite of Thebes,
 To cleymen kyngdom¹ of the cite, wente
 For his felawe daun Polimytes,
 Of whiche the brother daun Ethiocles² 1490
 Ful wrongfully of Thebes held the strengthe.
 This tolde she by proces al by lengthe.

She told ek how Hemonydes³ asterte,
 When Tideus slough fifty knyghtes stoute ;
 She told ek al the prophecies by herte,
 And how that seven kynges with hire route
 Besegeden the cite alle aboute ;
 And of the holy serpent, and the welle,
 And of the furies alle she gan hym telle.

*Associat profugum Tideo primus Polynycem,
 Tideia legatum docet insidiasque secundus, 1501
 Tercius Hemoniden canit, et vates latitantes,
 Quartus habet reges ineuntes prelia septem ;
 Lemniadum furie quinto narrantur et anguis,
 Archimori bustum sexto ludusque leguntur.
 Dat Grayos Thebis et vatem septimus umbris,
 Octavo cecidit Tideus, spes, vita Pelasgis ;
 Ypomedon nono moritur cum Parthonopeo,
 Fulmine percussus decimo Cappaneus superatur,*

¹ Claim sovereignty. ² Polyneices and Eteocles ³ The escape
 of Hemonides is related in the *Thebais*, book iii.

*Undecimo sese perimunt per vulnera fratres,
Argian flentem narrat duodenus et ignes.*¹ 1511

Of Archinoris² burynge, and the pleyes,
And how Amphiorax fil thorgh the grounde,³
How Tideus was slayn, lord of Argeyes,⁴
And how Ypomedon in litel stounde
Was dreynt, and dyed Parthonope of wounde ;
And also how Cappaneus the proude⁵
With thunder dynt was slayn, that criede loude.

She kan ek telle hym how that either brother,
Ethiocles and Polymyte also, 1520
At a scarmyche ech of hem slough other ;
And of Argyves wepynge⁶ and hire wo ;
And how the town was brente she told ek tho ;
And so descendeth doun from gestes olde
To Diomedé, and thus she spak and tolde.

¹ These lines, which constitute an argument of the twelve books of the *Thebais* of Statius, are evidently taken from an ancient MS. They are not in the *Filostrato*. The following is a literal translation : —

The first brings together the exile Polyneices with Tydeus.

The second shows Tydeus as envoy, and the ambuscade.

The third sings of Hemonides and the hiding prophets.

The fourth has the seven chiefs entering upon war.

In the fifth the furies of the Lemnian women are told, and the snake.

In the sixth we read of the tomb of Archemorus, and the games.

The seventh presents the Greeks to Thebes and the prophet to the
1. ades.

In the eighth Tydeus fell, the hope, the life of the Pelasgi.

Hippomedon dies in the ninth, with Parthenopæus.

In the tenth Capaneus is overcome, struck by lightning.

In the eleventh the brothers by wounds destroy each other.

The twelfth tells of weeping Argos and the (funeral) fires.

² Archemorus, a child killed by a dragon at Nemea, and buried by the seven heroes on their way to Thebes. ³ Amphiaræus, the soothsayer, was swallowed up by the earth as he was about to fall into the hands of the enemy, and was made immortal by Jupiter. ⁴ Argos.

Hippomedon and Parthenopæus were killed during the siege, and Capaneus was struck by Jupiter with a flash of lightning as he was scaling the walls. Cf. *Inferno*, xiv. 63. ⁶ The weeping of the Greeks, whom Roman poets called Argivi.

"This ilke boor bitokneth Diomede,
 Tideus sone, that doun descended is
 Fro Meleagre, that made the boor to blede ;
 And thy lady, wher-so sche be, ywis, 1529
 This Dyomede hire herte hath, and she his ;
 Wepe if thow wolt, or lefe, for out of doute
 'This Diomede is inne, and thow ert oute."

"Thow saist nat soth," quod he, "thow sor-
 ceresse !

With al thi false goost ¹ of prophecie !
 Thow wenest ben a grete devineresse !
 Now sestow nat this fool of fantasie,
 Peyneth hire on ladys for to lye ?
 Away !" quod he, "ther Joves geve the sorwe !
 Thow shalt be fals paraunter yet to morwe !

"Als wel thow myghtest lyen on Alceste,²
 'That was of creatures, but ³ men lie, 1541
 That ever weren, kyndest, and the beste ;
 For when hire housbonde was in jupartye
 To dye hymself, but if she wolde dye,
 Sho ches ⁴ for hym to dye, and gon to helle,
 And starf anon, as us the bokes telle."

Cassandre goth, and he, with cruel herte,
 Forgat his wo for angre of hire speche ;
 And from his bed al sodeynly he sterte, 1549
 As though al hool hym hadd ymade a leche ;⁵
 And day by day he gan enquere and seche
 A soth of this, with al his fulle cure,
 And thus he driveth forth his aventure.

¹ Cassandra was doomed by Apollo not to be believed. ² Wife of
 Admetus. ³ Unless. ⁴ She chose. ⁵ Physician.

Fortune, which that permutacioun
 Of thynges hath, as it is hyre committed,
 Thorgh purveiaunce and disposicioun
 Of heigh Jove, as regnes shal ben flitted
 Fro folk in folk, or when they shal ben smitted,¹
 Gan pulle away the fetheres bright of Troie,
 Fro day to day, til they ben bare of joie. 1560

Amange al this, the fyne of the parodye²
 Of Ector gan approchen wonder blyve ;
 The fate wold his soule shold unbodye,
 And shapen hadde a mene³ it out to dryve,
 Ageins which fate hym helpeth not to stryve ;
 But, on a day, to fighten gan he wende,
 At which, allas ! he caughte his lyves ende.

For which me thenketh every manere wight
 That haunteth armes oughte to bewayle 1569
 The deth of hym that was so noble a knyght :
 For, as he drough a kynge by thavantaille,⁴
 Unware of this, Achilles, thorgh the maylle,
 And thorgh the body, gan hym for to ryve ;
 And thus the worthy knyght was brought of
 lyve.

For whom, as olde bokes tellen us,
 Was made swiche wo, that tonge it may not
 telle ;
 And namely, the sorwe of Troylus,
 That next hym was of worthinesse welle ;⁵
 And in this wo gan Troylus to dwelle,

¹ Smitten. ² End of the passage (Gr. *πάροδος*, a going past).
Μεῖνα. ⁴ A part of the helmet. ⁵ Source.

That what for sorwe, and love, and for unreste,
Ful oft a day he bad his herte breste.¹ 1581

But, natheles, though he gan hym despaire,
And drede ay that his lady was untrewē,
Yet ay on hire his herte gan repaire,
And as thise lovers don, he sought ay newe
To gete agein Cryseyde, brighte of hewe ;
And in his herte he wente hire excusynge,
That Calkas caused alle hire tarynge.

And ofte tyme he was in purpos grete,
Hymselfen like a pilgrym to degyse, 1590
To sen hire ; but he may not conterfete,
To ben unknowen of folk that weren wyse,
Ne fynde excuse aright that may suffise,
If he amange the Grekes knowen weere ;
For whiche he wepte ful oft and many a teere.

To hire he wroot yet ofte tyme al newe,
Ful pitously, he left it noght for slouthe,
Besechynge hire, that syn that he was trewe,
That she wol come agein, and hold hire
trouthe ;

For which Cryseyde upon a day for routhe,
I take it so, touchynge al this matere, 1601
Wroot hym agein, and seyde as ye may here.

“ Cupides sone, ensauple of goodlyhede, —
O swerde of knyghthod, sours² of gentillesse,
How myght a wight in tormente and in drede,
And heleles,³ yow sende as yet gladnesse ?

¹ Burst. ² Source. ³ Helpless.

I herteles, I sik, I in destresse,
 Syn ye with me, nor I with yow may dele,
 Yow neither sende Iche herte may, nor hele.

“ Your letres ful, the papir al ypleynted,¹
 Conceyved hath myn hertes pite ; 1611
 I have ek seyn, with teeris alle depeynted,²
 Youre letre, and how that ye requeren me
 To come agein ; which yet ne may not be ;
 But whi, leste that this letre founden were,
 No mencionun ne make I nowe for fere.

“ Grevous to me, God woot, is youre unreste,
 Youre haste, and that the goddes ordinaunce
 It semeth nat ye take it for the beste ; 1615
 Nor other thyng nys in youre remembraunce,
 As thenketh me, but oonly youre pleasaunce ;
 But beth not wroth, and that I yow beseche,
 For that I tarye is al for wikked speche.

“ For I have herde wel more than I wende³
 Touchynge us two, how thynges han ystonde,
 Whiche I shal with dissimulynge amende ;
 And, beth not wroth, I have ek understonde,
 How ye ne don but holden me in honde ;⁴
 But now no fors,⁵ I kan not in yow gesse,
 But alle trouthe and alle gentillesse. 1630

“ Com I wole, but yet in swich disjoynte
 I stonde as now, that what yere or what day
 That this shal be, that kan I noght apoynte ;
 But in effect I preye yowe, as I may,

¹ The very paper complaining. ² Cf. v. 1336. ³ Believe. ⁴ De
 xive me. ⁵ No matter.

Of your good word, and of youre frendship ay ;
For trewely while that my lif may dure,
As for a frend, ye may in me assure.

“Yet preyē I yow, on evyl ye ne take
That it is short which that I to yow write ;
I dar not, ther I am, wele letres make, 1640
Ne nevere yet ne koude I wel endite ;
Ek grete effect men write in place lite,
The entente is alle, and not the letres space ;
And farth now wel, God have you in his grace !
“*La vostre C.*”

This Troylus this letre thought al straunge,
Whan he it saugh, and sorwfullyche he sighte,
Hym thought it like a kalendes¹ of chaunge;
But, finally, he ful ne trowen myghte,
That she ne wold hym holden that she hyghte;²
For with ful yvel wil list hym to leve,³ 1651
That loveth wel, in swiche cas, though hym
greve.

But natheles, men seyn that, at the laste,
For any thyng, men shal the sothe see ;
And swich-a cas betid, and that as faste,
That Troylus wel understood that she
Nas not so kynde as that hire oghte be ;
And finally, he woot now, out of doute,
That al is lost that he hath ben aboute.

Stood on a day in his malencolye 1666
This Troylus, and in suspicioun

⁴ The beginning. Cf. ii. 7. ² Promised. ³ Believe.

Of hire, for whom he wende for to dye ;
 And so bifel, that thorghout Troie town,
 As was the gyse, iborn was up and down
 A manere cote armur, as seith the storie,
 Biforn Deiphebe, in signe of his victorie.

The whiche cote, as telleth Lollius,¹
 Deiphebe it hadde rent fro Diomede
 The same day ; and when this Troylus
 It saugh, he gan to taken of it hede, 1670
 Avysinge of the lengthe and of the brede,
 And al the werke ; but, as he gan biholde,
 Ful sodeynli his herte gan to colde,²

As he that on the coler fonde withinne
 A broche, that he Cryseyde gaf that morwe
 That she from Troie moste nedes twynne,
 In remembraunce of hym, and of his sorwe ;
 And she hym layde agein hir feith to borwe,³
 To kepe it ay ; but now ful wel he wiste,
 His lady nas no langer on to triste. 1680

He goth hym hom, and gan ful soone sende
 For Pandarus ; and al this newe chaunce,
 And of this broche, he told hym word and
 ende,⁴

Compleynynge of hire herte variaunce,
 His longe love, his trouth, and his pennaunce ;
 And after Deth, withouten wordes moore,
 Ful fast he cried, his rest hym to restoore.

Than spak he thus : " O lady myn, Cryseyde,

¹ An unknown author whom Chaucer professes to follow. Cf. i. 394 ; ii. 14. ² Grow cold. ³ Pledge. ⁴ Mr. Skeat, following Dr. Hicks, would read "ord and ende," beginning and end.. Cf. ii. 1495 ii. 102, and *Canterbury Tales*, l. 8323.

Wher is youre feith, and wher is youre biheste ?
 Wher is your love, where is youre trouth ?" he
 seyde. 1690

"Of Diomedede have ye now al this feeste !
 Allas ! I wold han trowed at the leeste,
 That syn ye nold in trouthe to me stonde,
 That ye thus nold han holden me in honde.¹

"Who shal now trow on any othes mo ?
 Allas ! I nevere wold han wende, or this,
 That ye, Cryseyde, koude han chaunged so,
 Ne but I hadde agilt,² and don amys ;
 So cruel wende I noght youre herte, iwys,
 To sle me thus ! Allas ! youre name of trouthe
 Is now forlorn, and that is al my routhe. 1701

"Was ther non other broch yow liste lete,
 To feffe with ³ youre newe love," quod he,
 "But thilke broch that I, with teris wete,
 Yow gaf, as for a remembraunce of me ?
 Non other cause, allas ! ne hadde ye,
 But for despit ; and ek for that ye mente
 Al outerly to shewen youre entente.

"Thorgh which I se, that clene out of youre
 mynde

Ye han me caste, and I ne kan nor may 1710
 For al this world withinne myn herte fynde
 To unloven yow a quarter of a day ;
 In cursed tyme I borne was, walawey !
 That yow that dothe me al this wo endure,
 Yet love I best of any creature.

¹ Deceived me. Cf. v. 1628. ² Offended. ³ Endow.

“Now God,” quod he, “me sende yet the
grace,

That I may meten with this Diomede!
And trewely, if I have myghte and space,
Yet shal I make, I hope, his sides blede: 1719
O God!” quod he, “that oughtest taken nede
To ferthren trouthe, and wronges to punice,
Whi nyltow don a vengeaunce of this vice?

“O Pandarus, that in dremes for to triste
Me blamed hast, and wonte oft ert upbreyde,
Now maistow sen thi self, if that the liste,
How trew is now thi nece, bright Cryseyde!
In sondry formes, God it woot!” he seyde,
“The goddes shewen bothe joye and teene
In slepe; and by my dreame it is now seene.

“And certainly, withouten more speche, 1730
From hennesforth, as ferforth as I may,
Myn owen deth in armes wol I seche.
I recche nat how sone be the day;
But trewely, Cryseyde, swete May,
Whom I have ay with al my myght yservyd,
That ye thus don, I have it not deserved.”

This Pandarus, that al thise thynges herde,
And wiste wel he seyde a soth of this,
He noght a word agein to hym answerde;
For sory of his frendes scrwe he is, 1740
And shamed for his nece hath don amys;
And stont astoned of thise causes tweye,
As stille as stone; o word ne koude he seye.

But at the laste thus he spak and seyde,

“ My brother deere, I may do the namore ;
 What shold I seyn ? I hat,¹ iwis, Cryseyde !
 And, God woot, I wol hat hire everemore :
 And that thow me bisoughtest don of yore,
 Havyng unto myn honour ne my reste
 Right no rewarde,² I dide al that the leste. 1750

“ If I dide oght that myghte lyken³ the,
 It is me lief ; and of this treson now,
 God woot that it a sorwe is unto me ;
 And, dredeles, for hertes ese of yow,
 Right faine I wolde amende it, wiste I how :
 And fro this worlde, Almighty God, I preye,
 Deliver hire soone ! I kan namore seye.”

Grete was the sorwe and pleynte of Troy-
 lus ;

But forth hire cours Fortune ay gan to holde ;
 Cryseyde loveth the sone of Tydeus, 1760
 And Troylus mot wepe in cares colde.
 Swich is this world, who-so it kan biholde !
 In ech estat is litel hertes reste !
 God leve us for to take it for the beste !

In many cruel bataille, out of drede,
 Of Troylus, this ilke noble knyght, —
 As men may in this olde bokes rede, —
 Was seen his knyghthod and his grete myghte ;
 And, dredeles, his ire day and nyghte,
 Ful cruely the Grekes ay aboghte, 1770
 And alwey moost this Diomede he soghte.

And ofte tyme I fynde that they mette

¹ Hate. ² Regard. ³ Please.

With bloody strokes, and with wordes grete,
Assayinge how hire speres weren whette ;
And, God it woot, with many a cruel hete
Gan Troylus upon his helm to bete ;
But, natheles, Fortune it noght ne wolde,
Of otheres honde that either dyen sholde.

And if I hadde taken for to write
The armes of this ilke worthi man, 1780
Than wold Ich of his battailles endite ;
But for that I to writen first bygan
Of his love, I have seyde as I can.
His worthy dedes, who-so lest hem here,
Rede Dares ;¹ he kan telle hem alle ifeere.²

Besechyng every lady bright of hewe,
And every gentil womman, what she be,
That al be that Cryseyde was untrewe,
* That for that gilt she be not wroth with me.
Ye may hire gilt in otheres bokes se, 1790
And gladlier I wol write, if yow leste,
Penelopes trouthe, and good Alceste.

Ny³ sey nat this al only for thise men,
But moost for wommen that betrayed be
Thorgh false folk, — God geve hem sorwe,
amen ! —

That with hire grete wit and subtilite
Betraise yow : and this commeveth⁴ me
To spek ; and in effect yow alle I preye
Beth war of men, and herkeneth what I seye.

¹ Dares Phrygius, to whom was attributed a Latin work on the siege of Troy. ² Together. ³ Ne I. ⁴ Moveth.

Go, litel boke, go, litel myn tregedie ! 1800
 Ther God my maker, yet er that I dye,
 So sende me myght to maken som comedye !
 But, litel book, no makynge thow nenvye,¹
 But subgit be to alle poesie,
 And kysse the steppes, wheras thow seest
 space,

Of Virgile, Ovyde, Omer, Lucan, Stace.

And, for ther is so grete dyversite
 In Englissh, and in writynge of our tonge,
 So preye I to God, that non myswrite the,
 Ne the mys-metere, for defaute of tonge ! 1810
 And red wher so thow be, or elles songe,
 That thow be understonde, God I beseche !
 But yet to purpos of my rather² speche.

The wrath, as I bigan yow for to seye,
 Of Troylus, the Grekes boughten deere ;³
 For thousandes his hondes maden deye,
 As he that was withouten any peere,
 Save Ector, in his tyme, as I kan here ;
 But, walawey ! save only Goddes wille,
 Dispitously hym slough the fiers Achille. 1820

And when that he was slayn in this manere,
 His lighte gost ful blisfully is wente
 Up to the holughnesse⁴ of the seventhe spere,
 In convers letynge everych elemente ;⁵
 And ther he saugh, with ful avysemente,

¹ Envy no making (writing of poetry). ² Former. ³ Sorely atoned for. ⁴ Concavity. ⁵ The earth, composed of the "four elements," appeared convex.

The erratyk sterres, herkenynge armonye,
With sownes ful of hevenyss melodie.

And down from thennes faste he gan avyse
This litel spot of erth,¹ that with the se
Embraced is ; and fully gan despice 1830
This wreched world, and helde al vanyte,
To respect of the pleyne felicity²
That is in hevene above : and at the laste,
Ther he was slayn his lokinge down he caste.

And in hymself he lough³ right at the wo
Of hem that wepten for his deth so faste,
And dampned al our werk that folweth so
The blynde luste, the which that may not laste,
And sholden al our herte on hevene caste ;
And forthe he wente, shortly for to telle, 1840
Ther as Mercurie sorted⁴ hym to dwelle.

Swich fin hath, lo ! this Troylus for love !
Swich fyn hath al his grete worthynesse !
Swich fyn hath his estat real⁵ above !
Swich fyn his luste, swich fyn hath his no-
blesse !

Swich fyn hath false worldes brotelnesse !
And thus bigan his lovyng of Cryseyde,
As I have tolde, and in this wise he deyde.

O yonge fresshe folkes, he or she,
In which that love up groweth with youre age,
Repeireth hom fro worldly vanyte, 1851

¹ Cf. *Parlement of Foules*, l. 57. ² Full felicity, *i. e.*, *summum bonum*. ³ He could well do this in the seventh heaven. ⁴ Decreed
Regal.

And of youre herte up casteth the visage
 To thilke God, that after his ymage
 Yow made, and thynketh al nys but a faire,
 This worlde that passeth soon, as floures faire.

And loveth hym the which that right for love,
 Upon a crois, our soules for to beye,
 First starfe and roos, and sitt in heven above,
 For he nyl falsen no wight, dar I seye,
 That wol his herte alle holly on hym leye; 1860
 And syn he best to love is, and most meke
 What nedeth feyned loves for to seke?

Lo! here of payens corsed olde rites!
 Lo! here what alle hire goddes may availle!
 Lo! here this wreched worldes appetites!
 Lo! here the fyn and guerdon for travaille,
 Of Jove, Apollo, of Mars, and swich rescaille!¹
 Lo! here the forme of olde clerkes speche
 In poetrie, if ye hire bokes seche.

LENVOYE DU CHAUCER.

O moral Gower,² this boke I directe 1870
 To the, and to the philosophical Strode,³
 To vouchen-sauf, ther nede is, to correcte,
 Of youre benignites and zeles goode.
 And to that sothfast Criste that sterf on roode,
 With al myn herte, of mercy evere I preye,
 And to the Lord right thus I speke and seye:

¹ Scapegraces. (Literally, rascals.) ² John Gower returned this compliment in his *Confessio Amantis*. ³ Probably Ralph Strode an eminent scholar, said to have been tutor to Chaucer's son.

Thow Oon, and Two, and Thre, eterne on
 lyve,
 That regnest ay in Thre, and Two, and Oon,
 Uncircumscript, and al maist circumscribe !
 Us from visible and invisible foon 1880
 Defende, and to thi mercy everichon,
 So mak us, Jesu, for thy mercy digne,
 For love of Maide and Moder thyn benigne !

CHAUCERS WOORDES UNTO HIS OWNE SCRIVENER.

ADAM SCRIVENER, if ever it thee befalle,
 Boece or Tróylus for to write newe,
 Under thy longe lockes maist thou have the
 scalle,
 But after my making¹ thou write² more trewe !
 So oft a day I mote thy werke renewe,
 It to correct and eke to rubbe and scrape :
 And all is thorgh thy negligence and rape !³

¹ Making poetry. ² Cf. *Troilus and Cryseyde*, v. 1809. ³ Haste



